

Home Lawn and Garden



Specials Expires May 12, 1997

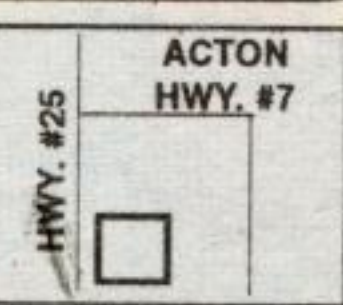
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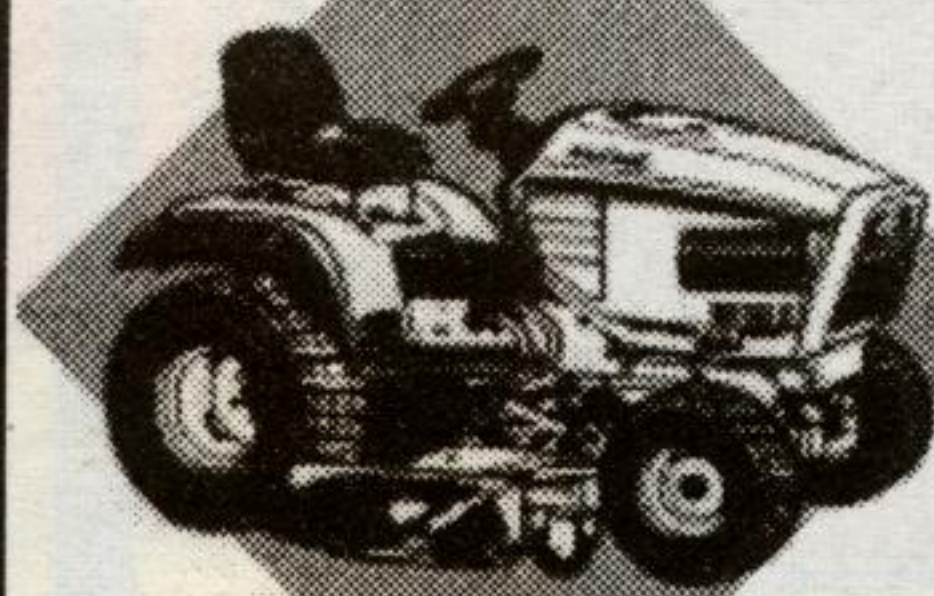
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Better bulbs are possible by following these tips

Few moments in life are as welcome as the first sign of spring, when the green shoots of fall planted bulbs first pop up out of the ground.

They promise spectacular beauty, which they deliver. Your hard work last fall planting tulips, narcissi, crocuses and other bulbs will be richly rewarded with glorious blooms.

While you're enjoying the view it's a good time to think ahead to next year's blooms. Some simple steps taken now can pay off with a yard full of beautiful bulb flowers for many springs to come.

Give "naturalized" bulbs a spring energy boost. The term naturalized refers to bulbs that are left in the ground to return year after year. Some are better "returners" than others. Most tulips, for example, are magnificent their first year of bloom, but diminish over time. On the other hand, narcissi, such as daffodils, will not only return, but multiply over the years.

When the first shoots appear in spring, naturalized bulbs appreciate a shot of a high nitrogen liquid fertilizer such as Stern's Miracid. The young shoots crave nitrogen, and Miracid contains 30 percent of this vital nutrient. Mixed in water according to label directions, the nutrients can be absorbed through the plant's leaves as well as the roots. Don't worry about the word acid

in Miracid; that simply refers to the product's ability to slightly acidify soil through a natural partnership with micro-organisms in the soil.

When the blooms of spring bulbs in garden beds have faded, cut the flower heads off, but leave the green foliage. Professional bulb growers in Holland call it "heading" the bulb. By removing the flower, the plant will expend no effort making seed pods. It will put its energy into building a strong, healthy bulb for next year's bloom. This technique is especially helpful for tulips, but is labor intensive and best confined to bulbs in the bed and border. For naturalized bulbs, say a whole field of daffodils, it's not worth the effort. Natural is natural.



If bulbs are growing in the lawn, hold off mowing the lawn until the naturalized bulbs die back. For a good return next season, it's necessary to let the foliage remain for six weeks. This is usually not a problem for very early bulbs, such as crocus. However, for later blooming daffodils, six weeks may be too long to let the lawn grow. In that case, mow them down, and next fall confine your "daffs" to a more marginal area of the yard.

Bulbs such as tulips are nature's spring gift. Rewarding these plants with a spring "energy boost" using a high nitrogen liquid fertilizer, such as Stern's Miracid, will help them to return more glorious next year.

PLUG IN ENERGY SAVINGS BY DESIGN

Planting a tree, shrub or vine can provide benefits greatly outweighing the cost. Well-planned landscaping can not only provide energy savings, but also can increase the beauty and value of your home.

Planting trees that lose their leaves on the southern and western sides of your home provides summer shading to cool your home, lowering summer cooling costs. In winter these same trees will allow the sun the shine in to provide natural light and warmth into your home.

Planting evergreen shrubs and trees on the northern and western sides of your home creates a natural winter wind-break, cutting winter heating costs.

Shading your air conditioning unit not only saves energy, but helps lengthen the life of the unit. The shade provided by a tree or shrub eases the strain on an air conditioner unit. Just be sure not to block the air circulation necessary to run the machine efficiently.

Vines are another quick and beautiful energy saver. Deciduous vines provide

quick-growing shade on the walls of your home. Consult a professional landscaper to help you choose the right vine.

Studies show landscaping can also improve the resale value of your home and reduce noise pollution.

Remember, before beginning a landscaping project, call us to find out if there are underground lines you need to avoid. Also, don't plant tall growing trees under power lines.

For energy savings, beauty and noise reduction, nothing beats landscaping.

3. LANDSCAPE WITH CARE

• Call before you dig. Your utility can tell you the location of any underground lines.

• Don't plant tall-growing trees under power lines. If you have a tree with power lines running through it, don't climb it or build anything in it. Call if the tree needs trimming.

• Keep bushy shrubs away from your meter.



43 Alice Street, Acton
853-3700

Direct Line To Customer Service 853-3701