

## Spring Home and Garden

### Mulching and composting, environmentally friendly procedures for a successful garden

Healthy, conditioned soil is essential to successful gardening. Whether it's creating a new lawn or garden or maintaining an existing one, the recipe for success is as simple as getting back to basics.

In many gardens, adding a mulch may be the only step necessary to keep things in balance.

Composed of organic or inorganic materials such as wood chips, bark, straw and gravel, mulch cushions plants against the adverse effects of the wind, sun and rain. It moderates soil temperatures, deters weeds and improves the overall soil structure.

The mulch acts as a protective cover for the soil and roots. When mixed into the soil, mulch introduces important nutrients that promote root growth.

During dry spells, mulches help protect the soil from the evaporative effects of sun and wind and keep the soil from drying out and hardening.

Ideally, mulch should be loose and airy when placed over the soil, rather than compacted. Less compaction means healthier roots and a more active exchange of water and food beneath the soil.

Where mulch is primarily used as a top-dressing, compost is considered one of the ultimate soil conditioners. Compost is made from just about anything organic, such as vegetable and fruit scraps, hedge trimmings, sawdust, leaves, eggshells, etc. Avoid using fatty meat scraps and similar waste as it decomposes at a slower rate, creates odor and often attracts dogs and rodents to your compost pile. Because smaller pieces compost faster, it is also wise to avoid material thicker than one-quarter inch.

Once the materials are gathered, the simplest way to make compost is in a pile or in special bins designed specifically for composting. But it is important to select a convenient, well-drained spot without direct sunlight for maximum composting action.

The best compost piles are formed in layers. Start with a bottom layer of brush to support the pile and help aerate it.

Continue adding alternating, but equal layers of slow-decaying materials such as leaves, woodchips, sawdust and fast-decaying materials such as grass clippings and food wastes. Then, add a compost activator and a two-inch layer of garden soil. Remember to moisten each layer thoroughly as it helps to speed the decomposition process.

As the compost begins to break down and create heat, care must be taken to systematically turn the pile.

Turning the compost with a pitchfork or aerator tool every few days moves composted material away from the centre of the pile and replaces it with partially composted material.

When mixed into the planting bed or lawn, finished compost has the ability to hold nutrients in the soil like a sponge and release them slowly as needed to hungry plants. It also contains large amounts of microorganisms beneficial to plant growth.



**Henry Stevens**  
(Certified Arborist)  
905-642-2758

### STEVENS TREE SALES

- Over 10,000 trees to choose from
- Shade trees 2" to 7" trunk diameter
- Evergreen trees 6' to 20' height
- We also plant & transplant trees
- Deep root fertilizing

**Please call for appointment**

RECORDS	SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED	
MAY 19 1995		
FBI - BETHESDA		

# HOME & GARDEN SHOW

## MARCH 28-APRIL 2

### Spring into Home Improvements!

Markville is the perfect place to start planning your projects. It's our largest Home & Garden Show ever... so come and be inspired by our 30 exhibitors!

**SAT. APRIL 1**

**We'll get you started!**

**Free Gardening Gloves & Seeds**

Visit Centre Court and receive a free pair of gardening gloves and package of seeds. Quantities are limited, one pair per adult.

## For my family Markville fits us...



# MARKVILLE

## SHOPPING CENTRE

Eaton's, Sears, The Bay, Wal-Mart, Ultra Mart, Pacific Linen. Plus 220 Stores & Services and Famous Players Theatres.

Intersection of Highway 7 & McCowan Road. For more information call (905) 477-6600.

**INCREASE YOUR LIVING SPACE**

Try our very competitive prices

- Room Additions
- 4 Season Sunrooms
- 2nd Storeys
- Dormered attic rooms
- Finished basements

**"Completely Guaranteed"**

**VERSABULD INC.**  
Master Custom Home Builders & Renovators  
since 1977  
905-640-0446