

Things you could or should be doing in your garden in...

...APRIL

- ✦ Our frost-free date is approaching (April 15); be aware of potential late spring frosts, and the damage they can inflict, especially on newly planted items. Old sheets or light blankets work well to protect plants in these conditions.
- ✦ Use wire supports or cages around newly emerging perennials such as peonies and other taller, top-heavy flowers.
- ✦ Remove stakes and guy wires from trees planted last fall.
- ✦ Avoid tilling garden beds while soil is very wet as this increases compaction.
- ✦ Fertilize warm-season grasses (Bermuda, zoysia) after you have cut them twice, using a turf-type slow release fertilizer like Ferti-lome Lawn Food Plus Iron. Cool season grasses (fescue) can also be fertilized now with the same type of fertilizer.
- ✦ Prune/shear azaleas after flowers fade and apply a slow-release fertilizer. A systemic insecticide can also be applied at this time to prevent many insect issues later in the year, including lace bugs.
- ✦ Apply systemic insecticides to roses, hackberries, crepe myrtles and many other trees and shrubs to prevent infestations during the growing season.
- ✦ After our last frost date (April 15), start setting out early spring flowers, annuals and veggies, especially those started from seed, so they can begin hardening off.
- ✦ Prune early spring flowering shrubs like forsythia, quince and spirea after the flowers fade.
- ✦ Water newly transplanted annuals and perennials well until roots are established.
- ✦ Apply a 1-2" layer of mulch around trees and shrubs, keeping mulch a few inches away from the trunk/crown, and spread in an even layer; do NOT mound like a volcano.