

December Garden Guide

- * Remove snow from evergreen shrubs to prevent the branches from breaking. Tap the branches gently.
- * Place Christmas trees away from fireplaces, radiators, heat vents and anything else that could dry the needles. Keep your Christmas tree well watered from the time it is brought home until it is discarded.
- * Minimize traffic on a frozen lawn to reduce winter damage.
- * A common complaint in growing rubber plants indoors is yellowing leaves with dead spots on the edges. This is usually caused by overwatering. Bottom drainage helps remove surplus water.
- * House plants with large leaves and smooth foliage such as philodendrons, dracaena and rubber plant, benefit if their leaves are washed with a damp cloth to remove dust.
- * A home weather station that includes a minimum/maximum thermometer, a rain gauge and a weather log is a good gift for a gardener.
- * Check belts and spark plugs, change the oil, sharpen the blades and clean off dirt so equipment will be ready to go when you need it next spring.
- * Drain the fuel tank of the lawn mower or tiller before putting the machine away for the winter.
- * Clean and sharpen lawn and garden tools and store them in a dry storage area.
- * After Christmas, your live tree can be moved outside and be redecorated for the birds. Anchor the tree in a bucket full of damp sand. Put on strings of popcorn and cranberries. Apples, oranges, leftover breads and pine cones covered with peanut butter then dipped in birdseed can also be added. For best results, push the edible ornaments well into the tree.
- * Start reviewing and expanding your garden notes to help with next year's plans.
- * *Check fruits, vegetables, corms and tubers that you have in storage. Sort out any that show signs of disease and dispose of them.