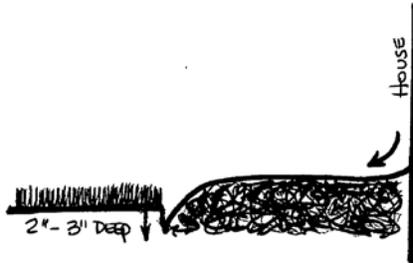


## PREPARATION, PLANTING AND MULCHING GUIDE

### Before you plant:



- Spray paint all bed lines
- Spray Round-up inside beds (keep in mind-Round-up will not kill dormant weeds and grasses)
- Wait at least 48 hours, preferably 2 weeks
- Cut bed edge with shovel 2"-3" deep
- Till bed one time
- Add soil conditioner/fill soil/top soil as needed (see Soil Conditioning Guidelines below)
- Add 5 lbs TSP (0-46-0) per 1000 sq ft of bed area
- Till bed thoroughly
- Rake bed smooth; make sure water drains away from house and out of bed into grass

### As you plant:

- Set out plants as per plan, stepping back to make small visual adjustments
- Lightly scar outside roots of container plants
- Install plants with  $\frac{1}{4}$  of root ball higher than existing grade; taper soil up to top edge of root ball (no soil on top)
- Compress soil around plants with feet
- Stake trees, if needed, with water hose or flexible cloth at tie-in point
- Remove stakes after first summer



### After you plant:



- Mulch with 3" dressing of pine needles, shaken and separated
- Tuck edges of bed with a flat-edged shovel OR
- Mulch with 2" dressing of pine bark mulch or mini chips (not recommended for sloped areas)

**HOW MUCH TO USE?** 1 bale pine needles per 40 sq ft  
 1-3 cu ft bag mulch per 18 sq ft  
 1 cubic yard mulch per 140 sq ft

**\*\* Finally and Most IMPORTANTLY – WATER your new landscape VERY THOROUGHLY!!**  
 New plantings need this special attention, especially during hot/dry periods.  
 If you have questions about this, please ask your designer, project manager or call the office.

### SOIL CONDITIONING GUIDELINES

All soils are unique in the way they respond to conditioning. Certain plants may still not grow properly given the treatments below. The following is intended as a general guideline only.

#### **WATERLOGGED/STICKY SOILS**

This type of soil requires sub-surface drainage to perform properly for most plantings. A French drain (gravel and slotted drain pipe) or a Terra-flow drainage system should be installed under the plant bed. The soil should then be lightened with 2-4" of sandy topsoil tilled in thoroughly with the existing soil. This mixture should contain at least 40% organic matter and should be lightly fertilized with a nitrate fertilizer during preparation. If sub-surface drainage is not feasible, plant wet tolerant plants in these areas. Wet Tolerant plants include daylilies, liriopse, mondo grass, shamrock holly, was myrtles, variegated carex and river birch.

#### **ORGANIC CLAY / LOAM**

If you are lucky, you have dark, rich clay/loam around the foundation of your house and your plant beds. This soil type is the product of careful and generous amounts of soil conditioners and organic matter deposited through the years. Other than supplying phosphorous (see other side) the most important step in working with this type of soil is protecting it. Be sure to never leave this soil exposed—after tilling and planting, mulch immediately and route your water to drain away from plant beds.

#### **SPECIAL ANNUAL BED RECIPE**

It is almost impossible to have good annuals without good soil. **DON'T SKIMP HERE.** Add 50 lbs. of Black Kow and 25 lbs. of potting soil or rich topsoil to each 10 sq. ft. of bed. In addition, mix into the soil 1/2 to 2/3 cup of annual plant food. Top dress annual beds with pine bark mini chips or soil conditioner to about 1" deep. You may also surround the outside of annual beds with a ring of pine needles to hold the mulch in place. Annual beds which produce yellowing foliage may be deficient in lime, iron or may be waterlogged. Always supplement annuals at least one time during the season with a liquid fertilizer.

#### **HEAVY CLAY**

This particular soil type requires positive drainage of surface water (ie: bed must be graded properly). Heavy clays normally need lightening. Grow-mix or finely ground pine bark, mixed into the soil at a rate of 1 cu. ft. conditioner to 12 sq. ft. of bed area is a satisfactory rate. If using ground pine bark, supplement the soil with a small amount of nitrate fertilizer. Heavy clay can be easily OVERFERTILIZED, producing a salt build-up. Five lbs. of 12-6-6 fertilizer mixed into a 1000 sq. ft. bed is satisfactory. When raking out final grade of bed, be sure all clods are broken up well and raked out, as these will tend to protrude out of the pine straw or mulch after rain

#### **SANDY SOIL**

This soil type is generally found in coastal areas, but can be found scattered anywhere, especially floodplain areas. This soil should be conditioned with peat moss, if it seems to dry out quickly. Try using 1 cu. ft. of peat moss per 12 sq. ft. of bed and increase if still too dry. If the drainage is very rapid, products like Terra-Sorb may be used to hold water for later plant use. This polymer can hold up to 100 times its weight in water. This can be a very effective product to use in planters that drain too quickly and require constant watering.

#### **SHADY NATURAL AREAS, ROOTY SOILS**

This is the most common type of soil for planting mistakes. Most hardwood trees take out large amounts of water from the soil in the late spring and summer months, creating a water shortage under the canopy. To remedy this situation (especially for shade-loving azaleas and rhododendron), build berms (mounds) of soil using a rich, red soil, conditioned with Grow-Mix or plenty of ground soil conditioner. Do not till into the existing tree roots, as this will actually generate more root growth from the overstory trees. Instead, build these soil berms on top of the existing natural area soil, making sure not to create drainage pockets, especially around dogwoods.