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## Winterizing your Garden Tools

Fall is here and it's that time of year when we start winterizing our garden. Mulching, tying up trees and shrubs, but we then forget we have other things to winterize like our garden tools and don't forget power tools as well. Now is the time to take one day to just concentrate on cleaning, sharpening and oiling these timesavers. Your tools will not only work better but will last longer and be more enjoyable to use.

Nothing is worse when you go out in the spring and start pruning and shoveling and your tools just don't cut like a butter knife! Make sure you scrap all the dirt off your shovels, rakes, hoes, pruners and your hand tools. Use a wire brush or one of those heavy duty scrub sponges, rinse and dry. Sharpen yours blades with a good sharpening stone and then oil the blades. Don't neglect wood handles either! Use sand paper to smooth out any nicks or splinters then get a rag and dip it into a good wood oil. Store in a dry shed or garage. Some people will fill a bucket or garbage can with enough sand to cover the blades to store and prevent rust.

Lawn mowers should be cleaned every time you use it. But sometimes we just want go inside grab a drink and smell and admire our freshly mowed lawn. Make sure to drain the remaining gas from your mower or use it until it runs empty. I like to use this time to mulch as much pine needles and leaves I can chop up to use around my garden. Turn the lawnmower over and scrape all the grass from the blades and underside of the mower. Any residue will cause rust and corrosion. If you can remove the blades and rub them with oil. If you want you can have it serviced so it's ready to go in the spring. Store your mower in a dry shed or garage.

So don't neglect you garden "buddies". They'll make your gardening more enjoyable. Until next time "get out and get dirty" .....next spring of course!

