

“Solutions for a happier lawn and garden”



SUMMER VACATION IS OVER (Bringing houseplants in for the Winter)

Your houseplants enjoyed a wonderful, long Summer vacation out on your deck, patio, front step, etc. They got to enjoy bright sunlight, warm temperatures, and many admirers. Sorry houseplants, but it is time to make your way inside. The days are becoming shorter and temperatures are getting colder. Most of your summer vacationing plants cannot handle the temperatures when they dip down below 50 degrees at night. Plants may show signs of damage if the nights get too cold consistently. Leaves may turn yellow, wilt, and drop off. Entire branches may die back or the plant may even meet its' demise. We can take a lesson from snowbirds, chasing the warmth. They have been doing it right for years!

Summer vacationing houseplants will be very happy that you are paying attention to them and not abandoning them out in the cold. However, if you take them too quickly from bright, outdoor sun to inside house conditions they may not show you all of their gratitude. If you can transition houseplants slowly from outside to inside, they will be so much happier. For instance, take a plant that has been in the full sun and move it to a shadier part of the yard, under a tree, onto a covered patio or even a screen porch. The longer your plants can transition outside before coming into your home, the happier they will be. If plants are light enough, you can bring them in at night and put them back out during the day. This way they get the best of both worlds, sunlight during the day and warmth at night.

Being the “bug lady/terminator” that I am, I must talk to you about insect control for summer vacationing plants. Not only, can the move from outside to inside be difficult but often they have to deal with unwanted stowaways moving inside with them. Certain insects are very happy to make their home on your houseplants. While your houseplants are enjoying a nice summer break, insects are busy laying eggs on leaves and branches, hiding in cracks and crevices of the bark, or burying themselves in the soil of the pot. As you are moving your plants inside, it is very likely that you will not see these unwanted hitchhikers. Once the insects get inside with your houseplants, they have got it made! We turn the heat up in our homes. Bugs love this. The plants are a permanent food source for the insects. They love this too. It is important to get rid of these stowaway insects before they become a big winter problem on your houseplants.

The most common houseplant pests are: aphids, whiteflies, mealybugs, scale, mites, and fungus gnats. They are all in the “sucking” insect category except for fungus gnats. This means they suck the good juices out of our plants and excrete them in the form of honeydew. This honeydew can make leaf surfaces, floors, and furniture below the plants shiny and sticky. Plants will become weak. Leaves may turn yellow and drop. If the insects are not taken care of, the plant will struggle to survive. Sounds dire but it really is not! The solution is easy. You need to build your arsenal of insect control with: Neem or Horticultural Oil, Bonide's Systemic Houseplant Insect Control, Safer's Houseplant Sticky Stakes, and Mosquito Bits. These are the perfect products to keep stowaways from becoming a problem. Use Neem or Horticultural Oil while plants are still outside and give them a really good spray down. This will help to smother any of those unwanted pests or pest eggs. If you have already brought the plants inside, no worries, you can spray them inside as well. Once inside, apply Systemic Houseplant Insect Control to the soil in the pot. Water it in slowly and your houseplant will happily absorb it into their entire system, protecting it from the inside out from damaging, sucking insects. Sticky traps work really well if you are being bothered by flying whitefly or fungus gnats. Mosquito Bits work organically and like a charm on annoying fungus gnats.





There is always so much I could tell you but I am going to leave you with one last piece of advice in regards to overwintering houseplants... DO NOT OVERWATER THEM, FERTILIZE THEM & MOST OF ALL...ENJOY THEM!

Come see us at Van Wilgen's. We would love to help!

Thanks a bunch...Stacey



Van Wilgen's

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