

Caring for your Colorado Landscape



Smart Tip SPRING

Watering your lawn during warm and dry conditions, will help prevent mite infestations.

(Check out the Smart Tips checklist on the back cover)

The history of Swingle

Celebrating 70 years of business in Colorado

Seventy years ago, John W. Swingle started his own business - unaware it would grow into one of the most respected and innovative landscape care companies in Colorado. 2017 marks Swingle's 70th year of proudly caring for both residential and commercial properties across the Front Range.

In 1947, John founded Swingle Tree Surgery Company out of the back of his old, reliable Jeep. It has been said that John would climb high into the trees in order to properly prune them, while his wife Viola would stand at the ready below. John would safely lower the branches he removed to the ground, where she would then stack them neatly in the back of their Jeep for disposal. They were a well-oiled machine destined for growth.

John's incredible knowledge of arboriculture and his mind for business, combined with his unwavering dedication to his customers, enabled the company to expand rapidly. Quality workmanship, and keeping up with the latest technologies, became Swingle's standard - his motto, "stay ahead of the pack." *(continued on the inside cover, "Tom's Talk")*



Japanese beetle becomes an increasing problem

Japanese beetle is a unique pest - damaging your property both as an adult and in the larval stages. The type of damage they inflict upon your landscape is very different.



Feeding from the adults on a wide variety of plants is very noticeable and unattractive. However, we are seeing more larvae (grubs) feeding on and damaging grass roots across the Front Range.

For 2017, we expect **more lawn damage** from the beetle larvae. *(continued inside)*



Lawn Care | Tree Service | Insect Control
Ash Tree Protection | Holiday Lighting

Swingle has offices in Denver, Firestone and Fort Collins - proudly serving residents across the Front Range of Colorado.

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Tom's Talk

 by Tom Tolkacz, CEO
Thank you for 70 years Colorado!

(The history of Swingle...continued from the front cover)

Sadly, just as John Swingle's dream was being fulfilled, he passed away in September of 1956. At that time, leadership of the company transferred to Earl Sinnamon, a former Denver City Forester and lover of the outdoors. Under Earl's direction the company flourished as a leader in professionalism, credibility and reliability - upholding the Swingle motto, "stay ahead of the pack". In 1978, Earl revolutionized the industry by purchasing a computer system, long before his competitors. It was this type of foresight that brought the company successfully into the 1980's.



John Swingle

Upon Earl's untimely passing, a partnership was formed between two long-time Swingle employees - Dave Dickson and Charles Morgan. Dave and Chuck remained dedicated to the progressive philosophy formed in the company's early years, which separated Swingle from competitors in the industry. They adhered to basic ideas such as quality service and exacting standards.

In December 1988, Charles Morgan retired and Dave Dickson became Swingle's new President. Dave remained committed to personal service, quality through innovation and controlled growth by limiting Swingle's service area.

When I became president back in 1998, our goal was to acknowledge that those closest to the customer should fully understand their needs and expectations. While leadership is necessary for the future, those who interact with the customer regularly must adopt and support our methods and systems to better serve you. From landscape care consultants, to customer care representatives to technicians, everyone should be focused on the customer experience. Your



constant referrals to family and friends tells us we are on the right path. We will continue listening and improving as we move into our next 70 years.

We still firmly believe that investing in our employees is paramount

to our success. We continually set the standard for knowledge, experience and professionalism within our industry. We strive to do the best job possible by reinforcing trust and fostering the long-term relationships, which we are known for throughout the community.

We owe our success to the people of the Colorado Front Range - the homeowners and commercial property managers we have been honored to serve over the last 70 years. Thank you for the continued opportunity to care for your lawn, tree and landscape needs. We are always here to answer any questions regarding your landscape - do not hesitate to contact us.

Keeping the green side up,

Thomas R. Tolkacz, CEO



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On your trees and shrubs

Japanese beetle adults are shiny, metallic green and about a half inch long. In the summer months, they typically swarm around plant foliage and feed on the tops of leaves, quickly "skeletonizing" the foliage. Damaged leaves will turn brown and prematurely fall off. There are over 300 varieties of plants the adult beetles regularly feed on. Virginia creeper vine, roses, elm, linden, maple and fruit trees are most often targeted.

On your lawn

Japanese beetle larvae are a type of white grub, which feeds on grass roots. They are easy to identify with a white, opaque body, dark head and often "C-shaped" in appearance. The larvae feed on grass roots, cutting off the grasses ability to obtain the necessary water to grow. Damaged areas are more susceptible to water stress, disease and eventual death. Infected areas will turn brown and straw-like and will spread quickly as the water supply is cut off.



 Treatment programs are available, contact Swingle today



▶ When to water:

Between 6:00 and 9:00 am is ideal in Colorado.

▶ How much to water:

Most lawns need 3/4" to 1" of water, three to four days per week. When it's hot and dry, it may require more. If grass begins turning a greyish-blue color, or if the mower leaves lines, the grass is drought stressed - increase watering. Hand water dry and brown spots as necessary.

▶ Test your sprinkler coverage:

Place cans at varying distances from sprinkler heads, then run the system normally. Measure the water in each can. A slight difference can be enough to cause a dry spot to develop. Check the system twice during the season.

▶ Test for soil moisture:

Push a screwdriver into the soil. Dry soil will be hard and compacted. Moist soil will be soft.

NOTE: Always consult your municipality for water restrictions.

TOP FIVE

Emerald ash borer tips for the Front Range

1. Determine if you have an ash tree

Ash trees feature compound leaves with 5 to 9 leaflets, buds and branches growing opposite from one another and diamond-shaped bark ridges (on mature trees).

2. Understand the signs of infestation

Look for thinning upper branches, twigs, loss of leaves, 1/8" holes on bark and a heavy increase of woodpecker activity.

3. Be aware of impostors

Lilac ash borer, ash bark beetle and apple tree borer look similar and cause the same symptoms. Swingle's certified arborists can help you identify what your tree has.

4. Help prevent further spread


Do not transport any hardwood or firewood to other locations, especially if it's near the quarantine zone in Boulder County.

5. If you have an ash tree, **START PLANNING NOW!**

Emerald ash borer is considered the most destructive forest pest ever in North America. It is responsible for killing more than 50 million ash trees in 29 states. Across the front range of Colorado, 1 out of 6 trees are at risk.

Decide if the overall health of the tree merits treatment or if it would be best to remove and replace it with a different species. If you aren't sure, contact Swingle.

Swingle offers soil and trunk injection applications and is currently treating ash trees for homeowners and municipalities across the Front Range.

 Schedule your free ash tree evaluation today



Preparing your landscape for the growing season

Expert *Tony Hahn* answers some frequently asked questions



Should I water my lawn over the winter and in the early spring?

Yes, especially if little to no moisture has been received and Colorado's blazing sun has been steadily shining. But understand that we're not suggesting you activate your irrigation system, which could still be susceptible to damage from below freezing temperatures. Watering with a hose-end sprinkler or nozzle (once a week) is acceptable. Watering 30-45 minutes, once a week, will provide enough moisture. Remember to disconnect your hose after use to prevent future freeze damage until temperatures stay above freezing.

Pay close attention to the south and west facing areas of your lawn (especially if it's sloping), and around evergreen trees and shrubs. Turf mites are one of the most damaging lawn pests in our area and thrive in dry conditions. Watering over the winter and early spring will help mitigate damage by keeping lawn roots healthy, while providing much-needed moisture to evergreens, which are often overlooked.



Should my lawn be aerated or power-raked?

Aeration is critical in the early spring, as root growth tends to accelerate during this time of year. Lawns also grow very quickly from April through June, and need oxygen and nutrients which aeration helps with.

Clay soils are predominant in most areas of the Front Range, meaning a spring aeration is vital. By nature, these soils are low-oxygen soils and aeration introduces oxygen into the root zone, encouraging growth.

As unsightly as they are, resist removing the plugs from your lawn after an aeration is completed. Let them dry out in the sun, then mulch them back into the lawn with your mower.

Power-raking is not recommended. While it may remove dead patches of grass, it also rips out healthy blades just beginning to grow. Mowing with the blade at its lowest setting will remove the dead grass safely.



Is a sharp mower blade important?

Dull mower blades are an invitation for lawn diseases. They also leave your lawn with ragged cuts, which will cause your lawn to dry out faster. Replacing the blade is a good option.

If you want to save a little money you can use a metal file to sharpen your blade (once a month is ideal during the height of the season, if possible). Of course, using a power grinding tool works best if you have one.

If you have a mowing service, make sure to ask them how often they sharpen/replace their blades each season.



When is the best time to fertilize?

We recommend fertilizing a lawn sometime in early spring after the snow melts, then four to five more times throughout the season. Most Front Range lawns are "cool-season" grasses, which grow best from April through June.

Fertilizing when the grass is growing quickly provides key nutrients at the right time, thickening the turf and promoting deeper root systems - ideal during hotter, drier months. A thick lawn also helps keep weeds from growing.



Besides my lawn, do I need to focus any attention on my trees?

As your trees emerge from dormancy, you may notice some branches have not survived the winter as new buds are not actively swelling. Amazingly, trees know to retain branches that are healthy and strong, while shedding less productive ones. Pruning dead branches will allow space for the remaining tree to safely and esthetically flourish.

Dead branches serve no purpose to the tree - becoming a safety hazard, while being more prone to disease and decay. Remember, always use safety precautions when pruning dead branches from trees. Contact a professional before you attempt to use rickety ladders and handsaws to get the job done. Safety should always be your first priority.

As earth's energy begins to awaken from winter, we welcome the arrival of the birds singing, the flowers blooming and the yard work returning. With a few early spring chores, your landscape will be better prepared for the long-awaited growing season ahead.

Tony Hahn is a Landscape Care Consultant at Swingle, a Certified Arborist and is known as the "voice of Swingle" - as seen on local Colorado TV stations.



For questions or to schedule Swingle services, call 303.731.1324 | 970.688.7244



MARCH

March 20
Spring Equinox
March 21
International
Day of Forests



APRIL

April 1
Lawn Care Month
April 22
Earth Day
April 28
Arbor Day



JUNE

June 5
World
Environment Day
June 19
National
Pollinator Week



AUGUST

August 1
Colorado Day
*Free Entrance
to all Colorado
State Parks*

A dry, warm winter could spell disaster for your lawn this spring

February 2017 has been one of the warmest and driest on record. The unseasonably warm temperatures, combined with a lack of moisture, can lead to desiccation on your lawn.

Desiccation is a state of extreme dryness, when water is lost at a faster rate than it's replaced. This not only causes stress to the root system, but it also leaves your lawn more susceptible to mite attacks.



Lawn mites can be hard to diagnose to the untrained eye and are most active and damaging in the months of February, March, April and even into May. Homeowners often realize there's an issue when patches of their lawn don't appear to be greening up as the growing season progresses.

Severe mite problems are best mitigated with a combination of strategic watering and Miticide applications, which Swingle offers. Miticide applications will decrease the damage from mites, but may not completely eliminate damage due to the extremely dry conditions.

If left untreated, you might find yourself replacing part or all of your lawn come the spring. Miticide applications, in addition to watering are your best defense against a spring surprise.

Because much of February has remained warm and dry, even a light snowfall will not eradicate the problem. Lawn mites have been provided the perfect conditions to survive in the root system, regardless of how much snow may have collected.



The best thing you can do to prevent mites from attacking your lawn is to water it during warm, dry conditions. A 30-45 minute watering, once a week, is sufficient during these times.

Pay close attention to south and west facing areas of the yard - especially near evergreen trees and shrubs, and along buildings and slopes, as they tend to dry out much faster.

Honey bees perform about 80% of all pollination worldwide.



The bee population has been declining due to disease and pest issues, drought, habitat destruction, lack of nutrition and environmental issues around the world.

How can YOU make a difference?

The easy answer is to make your property more bee friendly.

Bees need flowers to collect nectar and pollen throughout the season. Your garden should include plants, shrubs and trees that bloom at different intervals, which makes it easier for the bees to find the blooms and you'll enjoy season-long flowers.

Bees need water throughout the year to cool down their hive and dilute stored honey for consumption. A birdbath is one easy, attractive and cost-effective solution.

Proud sponsor of Denver Zoo's *Pollinator Pathway*



Call today for a free lawn mite evaluation on your property



Smart Tips SPRING

- Clear fallen leaves and branches
- Divide and transplant large perennials
- Water your lawn and trees
- Clean debris from gutters
- Plant summer flowering bulbs
- Rake the lawn by hand
- Replace mulch when warm
- Rinse off outdoor furniture



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 weed-free company.

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Are your trees budding out?

QUESTION: It's been a warm February and I'm noticing some of my trees and shrubs are budding. Should I be concerned?

ANSWER: The short answer is no.

Unseasonably warm weather does in fact "trick" trees and shrubs into believing spring has arrived, and you may very well notice a "budding out" beginning to occur. But that doesn't mean trees and shrubs will experience permanent damage.



Early budding?

The stored energy the tree is using to bud prematurely means it's not using that energy for new growth. Therefore, this will delay the growing cycle as the season begins.

The tree is taking a gamble when it prematurely buds, and if it loses, it simply starts the process all over again. Trees are very resilient. And while it might be concerning to see trees and shrubs budding in the winter, they will not be harmed. It might just take a little bit longer for the growing season to begin.

 Call today for a free tree evaluation on your property