



The following are communiques on the care of our lawns, gardens and trees.

Email Sent September 4th, 2020

TruGreen Spraying for Grubs on September 4th, 2020

We have been advised that TruGreen will be spraying for grubs in Condo 5 on Friday September 4th.

Please take precautions stepping on the grass, for yourself and any pets. Thanks.

Paul Mak
Condo 5 Secretary

CONDO 5 BOARD HIGHLIGHTS AUGUST 2020

Landscaping News

Our arborist, Aman, along with the Landscape Committee inspected all the trees - both homeowners' and those on common property.

Homeowners with trees that must be removed have been notified and the list of trees being monitored has been recorded and will be re-inspected next year.

Some common area trees will be pruned this Fall.

Reminders for homeowners on their tree care:

- Tree saucers around evergreens should be enlarged to avoid mechanical damage from lawn maintenance equipment. As all evergreens are growing wider when they mature, we are seeing an increase in damages to bottom branches of these healthy trees.
- Cutting the living bottom branches of a tree is **not** a substitute for enlarging a saucer and should be avoided at all cost as it ruins the tree's appearance.
- Japanese beetle traps should be moved **away** from any trees - as far as 20 feet if possible. Locating the traps close to a tree is simply attracting the beetles to that tree with predictable results.

- Some trees still have too much soil at the base of the trunk (the volcano look). The root flare at the base of the trunk must be exposed to allow air circulation to the tree. Simply pulling the soil away from the base of the trunk is sufficient.
- Some trees need pruning. Crab apple trees are especially in need of pruning to keep them healthy. Pruning is a homeowners' responsibility.
- There is a possible onset of **Fire Blight** in pear trees. Several trees were displaying Fire Blight which is a serious, very destructive, and highly contagious bacterial disease that can kill fruit trees. Any affected tree will be displaying blackish/brownish dead branches. These branches **must** be removed as soon as possible (homeowner responsibility).



- **Chinch Bug:** TruGreen has indicated there is no treatment for chinch bug except for regular watering.



Email Sent June 16th, 2020

York Region Vacant Land Condominium Corporation 1193

June 16, 2020

Dear Resident:

RE: Condo 5 update on Irrigation

Further to yesterday's note, our discussions with Porcupine have resulted in additional day cycles that will begin on Thursday and will continue until rain and cooler weather.

Here is how it will work:

The regular nightly watering every second night will continue, and a day watering will be added on the alternate days.

On another note, Procupine has two crews working full time to answer the calls for sprinkler head adjustments.

Thank you

Sincerely,

FirstService Residential
Agents for and on behalf of YRVLCC 1193 - Ballantrae - Phase V

Alban Tershana
Property Manager
Customer Care 1.855.244.8854

www.fsresidential.com

Email Sent June 15th, 2020

York Region Vacant Land Condominium Corporation 1193

June 15, 2020

Dear Resident:

RE: LAWN CARE DURING THIS UNSEASONABLY WARM AND DRY WEATHER

Many homeowners are concerned with the browning of their lawns. The following information will be helpful in caring for our lawns during this time.

The browning is due to high heat and drought- here are ways of determining if it is drought.

Drought Stress

*Like any plant, grass reacts to summer's **high temperatures** and lack of water with wilting, browning, or even death. Here's how to detect drought stress:*

- * Locate a brown patch and pull on the grass. If it won't pull easily from soil and is firmly rooted, it's likely brown due to drought.*
- * Push a screwdriver into soil in brown and green lawn areas. If the blade slips easily into green lawn and won't penetrate brown, soil is dry. In rocky soil, dig a small hole to check soil moisture.*
- * Look at the lawn as a whole. When drought is the culprit, brown patches appear randomly and in rough patterns. Lawn near a sprinkler head may be green, while lawn further away is brown. Grassy areas in shade remain greener when parts in full sun turn brown due to drought. Lawn in low spots will remain green while higher areas turn brown.*
- * Learn early signs of drought stress. Footprints remain on grass after it's walked on. Kentucky Bluegrass develops a grayish cast, while other grasses become darker hued. Grass blades may also wilt.*

Therefore, Condo 5 lawns will **not be cut** this week to not cause further damage to our lawns.

The irrigation system is working but it is not sufficient to relieve the drought and heat that we are experiencing. It would be beneficial to also water your lawn. The extent of the drought and heat requires a least an hour of watering every second to third day.

There was a suggestion that when Melfer does cut on the hot days of summer that the blades be raised. This is their practice.

Thank you for your understanding and your assistance in bringing back the green in our lawns.

Sincerely,

FirstService Residential
Agents for and on behalf of YRVLCC 1193 - Ballantrae - Phase V
Alban Tershana

Email Sent May 20th, 2020

York Region Vacant Land Condominium Corporation 1193

May 20, 2020

Dear Resident:

RE: Irrigation Start up

Hope everything is well!

Irrigation contractor has advised, are starting to run irrigation cycles tonight.

Just a couple of reminders:

- The system runs to water the entire community on a two day cycle.
- The system does not water in a consistent pattern....for example, "my neighbour got watered but I didn't". Houses side by side could be at different times and different days. A particular house could have the front lawn watered on one day then the back lawn watered the next.
- In accordance with the contract, we furnish and deliver to the Condominium all water required for healthy turf growth in accordance with reasonable and prudent horticultural practices for irrigation of lawns.
- Flowers, such as annuals, may require a different level of water than a healthy lawn. The homeowners may wish to consider watering on their own gardens when necessary.

If you have any questions in this regard, please don't hesitate to ask.

Thank you

Sincerely,

FirstService Residential
Agents for and on behalf of YRVLCC 1193 - Ballantrae - Phase V

Alban Teršana
Property Manager
Direct: (416) 847 - 4709
Customer Care 1.855.244.8854

Email Sent May 20th, 2020

Dear Resident:

RE: Notice Tree 2nd Pear/Spruce Treatment

Hope you're enjoying this much needed warmer weather.

Management would like to inform that Bartlett Tree Expert have scheduled the 2nd Pear/Spruce Treatment for this Friday May 22nd:

FRIDAY, MAY 22, 2020

Weather permitting from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

Although environmentally friendly we suggest caution regarding your pets, and ask for your awareness of additional vehicles on the roads.

The service will be conducted in compliance with social distancing orders.

We thank you for your cooperation.

Should you have any questions, please, feel free to contact me.

Have a lovely rest of the day!

Sincerely,

Yours truly,

FirstService Residential
Agents for and on behalf of YRVLCC 1193 - Ballantrae - Phase V

Alban Tershana
Property Manager
Direct: (416) 847 - 4709
Customer Care 1.855.244.8854

Email Sent April 30th, 2020

York Region Vacant Land Condominium Corporation 1193

April 30, 2020

Dear Resident:

RE: YRVLCC 1193 Notice Pear Treatment and Tree Fertilization Monday May 4, 2020

Management would like to inform all residents that Bartlett Tree Care Contractor has advised they will perform Tree Care Pear Treatment & Fertilization on:

Monday May 4, 2020

weather permitting from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

Although environmentally friendly we suggest caution regarding your pets, and ask for your awareness of additional vehicles on the roads.

The service will be conducted in compliance with social distancing orders.

We thank you for your cooperation.

Should you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

Yours truly,

FirstService Residential
Agents for and on behalf of YRVLCC 1193 - Ballantrae - Phase V

Alban Tershana
Property Manager
Customer Care 1.855.244.8854

Email Sent April 21st, 2020

APRIL LANDSCAPING UPDATE

We hope everyone is coping with this unprecedented time in our lives. We all hope the weather gets warmer soon.

We wanted to clarify that the memo sent out by the Board and Landscape Committee outlined our contracted services during normal times. As we know, we are not living that time and we must adapt to restrictions until further notice.

Here are some updates as follow-up to questions:

Melfer will take care of our lawns and gardens as usual. However, they are unable to take on any new work at this time such as renovating any common gardens or doing private work for homeowners.

There was a question about dethatching — that is not part of the contract. They will do the regular power raking cut. The power raking cut does help with the thatch.

Porcupine Irrigation system has confirmed it is an essential business and will start work in accordance with the contract agreement. The irrigation system will be operational for the supply and delivery of water no later than May 15th.

Bartlett Tree Experts will be carrying out time sensitive treatments starting next week which includes Pear Trellis Rust.

We will continue to keep you updated if things change due to the restrictions mandated by the Government and/or Public Health.

The Condo 5 Board of Directors

Email Sent April 20th, 2020

York Region Vacant Land Condominium Corporation 1193

April 20, 2020

Dear Resident:

RE: Covid-19 Updates Letter Notice from Melfer Landscaping Contractor

Hope all is well!

Our Corporation Landscaping contractor has provided extra updates that defines more about the services Melfer is allowed to perform under the Government of Ontario essential services restrictions.

For all details please view the attachment.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding.

Stay safe!

P.S if you cannot open the attachment, please find the content below:

Sincerely,

FirstService Residential
Agents for and on behalf of YRVLCC 1193 - Ballantrae - Phase V

Alban Tershana
Property Manager
Customer Care 1.855.244.8854

AN IMPORTANT UPDATE TO OUR BALLANTRAE CLIENTS

In the face of continued outbreak of COVID-19 and physical distancing, we have been given guidance/protocol moving forward as an “essential service”.

These guidelines we need to follow are based on information we found from some cities and or Landscape Ontario. With increased public safety measures in place to protect against the spread of COVID-19, Melfer is determined to follow these instructions and guidelines, as well as taking its own proactive measures to remain operational while mitigating public health risks associated with this virus.

Lawn Care and Landscaping Operations

“Landscaping and lawn care businesses that are providing services strictly for safety, security or sanitation purposes will be allowed. These services include lawn cutting, dethatching, rolling, clearing yard and garden debris, and aeration. This is to ensure that properties remain safe, property standards are met and that grass is maintained to help prevent ticks and mosquitoes in tall grass and standing water. **Landscaping projects that are to beautify or for aesthetics only will not be permitted.**”

Reference : <https://www.london.ca/newsroom/Pages/Lawn-care-and-grass-maintenance-.aspx>

The health and wellbeing of our staff and our clients has always been important to us. Please help us continue to provide the essential needs of each homeowner and your community by delaying any projects that are to beautify your outside living space, which we are being advised “is not” an essential service. We will continue to implement all necessary safety measures to make sure we do an effective job in fulfilling our contractual obligations.

We know you will understand and appreciate the extraordinary measures we are taking to protect our staff and our clients as we navigate this challenging situation together.

We thank you once again for making us a part of your every day and we look forward to serving you and the Ballantrae Community.

R. Liderri

Robert Liderri

President

Andrew Gibson

Andrew Gibson

Maintenance Manager

Email Sent April 16th, 2020

A Spring Message from your Landscape Committee-April 16 2020

The gentle art of caring for our lawns and gardens in these times of self-isolation is one of the few safe activities we currently have left immediately around our homes.

We are pleased to provide our neighbours with a comprehensive description of all the landscape services that are provided this spring and summer in order to assist them in planning any work they might wish to add to what is covered by our Condo.

We have included some information on homeowners' responsibilities as to the care of their landscape. We have also addressed some of the landscape issues we have faced as a community and offered some suggestions in dealing with them. You might also find some of the articles that are included of interest as well.

Please see the attached page which will lead you to the information you may wish to peruse.

Happy gardening!

REPORT ON LANDSCAPE SERVICES and ISSUES

SPRING 2020

*A comprehensive reference for homeowners prepared by Jeanne Brown, Chair Landscape Committee
And approved by the Board of Directors*

This is a spring supplement to our main [Landscaping and Gardening Guidelines](#) on our website. It is intended to inform homeowners about the landscape services that will be provided by the condominium this season. It also includes an outline of issues, responsibilities and suggestions that homeowners may find helpful in dealing with landscape care on their own properties.

The topics covered here are supplied in separate documents on our website available to readers by clicking on the “hot Links” supplied to allow them to read the topic or topics of their choice. For any further questions about the items below, or for consultations at any time, please contact us at: landscape1193@gmail.com, or contact our FSR Manager at: Alban.Tershana@fsresidential.com

Our topics are as follows:

Lawns and Gardens Services & Issues

see below

- Services provided by the Condo
- Issues and Homeowner Responsibilities

Trees Care Services & Issues

see below

- Services provided by the Condo
- Issues and Homeowner Responsibilities

LAWN AND GARDEN

SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE CONDO

By Melfer Maintenance

Spring cleaning

- Snow fences and markers removed.
- All lawns power swept and dead vegetation and winter debris removed.
- Areas where grass has lifted, due to frost, rolled gently.
- Stakes on trees straightened and/or removed, if no longer needed.

Lawn repair

- All lawns damaged by Melfer's equipment during winter snow clearing repaired with either sod or topsoil and seeding.
- New sod watered and maintained until it is well-rooted. After its first cut, it will receive regular maintenance.

Fertilizing

- Four applications of a high quality, slow-release fertilizer in the form of carefully metered pellets, applied as follows subject to weather conditions:
 - One at the end of April/early May
 - Two mid-summer
 - One during October

Melfer is to advise the condominium manager ahead of each fertilizing so that the Manager can inform homeowners accordingly.

Lawn mowing and trimming

- Weekly:
 - Grass cut to approximately 2 1/2 inches.
 - After every cut, grass edges trimmed around flower beds, trees, utility poles and boxes, fire hydrants, roads, driveways, sidewalks and walkways, sides of houses.
 - Grass clippings mulched and blowers used when appropriate.
 - After every second cut:
 - All trees and garden beds in both homeowner and common areas edged.
(*Note: Grass will be trimmed only around trees planted in a saucer of soil.*)
 - Monthly:
 - All driveways and roads edged

LAWN AND GARDEN

SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE CONDO

By Melfer Maintenance (cont.)

Weed control and pruning in home and common garden areas:

- All planting areas cultivated bi-weekly to keep soil loose and free from weeds.
- Weeds (complete with roots) removed bi-weekly, with care taken not to damage surrounding plants and trees. Garden beds raked to present a uniform appearance.
- Shrubs pruned according to the needs of each species.
- Dead wood removed from shrubs and from trees shorter than 12 feet.

By TruGreen

Weed and Grub Control:

- Three blanket spraying applications of FIESTA weed control at roughly the following times:
 - April/May
 - End of June
 - End of August/Sept.

Note: *The above treatments are most effective on broadleaf weeds but will assist in controlling clover and “creeping Charlie”. Unfortunately, herbicides effective in eliminating crabgrass are not currently allowed. **Please refer to the section below on homeowner responsibilities to control these weeds.***

- One application of “NaturGrub” nematode treatment in late August /early September. (TruGreen will work with our irrigation schedule as well as the weather in order to achieve maximum effect from these live nematodes in controlling grubs. ***Please refer to the section below for more hints on the use of nematodes by homeowners.***)

By Porcupine Management

Porcupine maintains the condominium irrigation system. Melfer is responsible for any damages to irrigation equipment caused by their winter ploughing equipment. However, Porcupine Management, in association with the golf course, is responsible for all repairs to the irrigation equipment whether caused by Melfer or otherwise. It is always recommended that homeowners contact Porcupine at info@ballantraegolfclub.com to locate water lines before any work involving digging is done on their property. The cost to repair any damage caused by homeowners, or their contractors, will be the homeowners’ responsibility.

LAWN AND GARDEN

SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE CONDO

MISCELLANEOUS

Support provided to the Board by the Landscape Committee

- Assess the impact of plant losses in common gardens
- Recommend upgrades and improvements.
- Identify and recommend two common gardens per year for complete renovation.
- In consultation with Melfer, specify plant replacements in gardens under renovation.

Rodent control:

- Animal control contractors are retained by the Board to maintain and replace bait boxes in all our common area gardens, in order to control voles, mice, and rats.

LAWN AND GARDEN

CURRENT ISSUES ON PRIVATE PROPERTIES and HOMEOWNER RESPONSIBILITIES

Crabgrass, Clover and Creeping Charlie:

In order to control weeds on one's property, a weekly patrol of the lawn by the homeowner checking for and removing any visible weeds is the best approach. There are several tools available that can be used for the purpose of crabgrass removal. One called "weed hound" is reportedly effective. Please note that, if the crabgrass is allowed to mature and turn reddish towards the end of summer, then it will have already seeded itself. Keeping ahead of it is the key to good control.

Grass Dying at Sides of Houses:

This unsightly problem is prevalent in either deep shade or very poor light due to adjacent properties. The solutions are limited. In deep shade, a shade grass seed is recommended, along with the correct amount of moisture. In very hot locations, where the grass is burning, frequent watering is recommended during hot weather. The Board of Directors and the Landscape Committee are also currently looking at workable alternate solutions for these issues. More news on that at a later date.

Voles:

If a squiggly "traffic pattern" is seen in the grass in the early spring once the snow has thawed, voles are likely to be the cause. Voles are a rodent resembling mice that are prevalent on properties close to woodlands and tall grass areas, such as in a good number of Condo 5 properties. They shelter and burrow in the ground. They are herbivores and will eat only the tops of the grass, not the crown. So while this might have an unsightly or even dramatic appearance in the spring, the grass will soon recover with warmer weather. But, they can also eat roots of plants in your garden and cause damage there as well. They are best eliminated by a qualified pest/rodent exterminator. If you don't already deal with an exterminator, PESTICON is a well-reviewed company that will come out to private properties and eliminate these rodents. This work must be contracted and paid for by the individual homeowner.

LAWN AND GARDEN

CURRENT ISSUES ON PRIVATE PROPERTIES and HOMEOWNER RESPONSIBILITIES

Raccoons and Skunks:

These animals dig up grass looking for food when they detect grubs or larvae beneath the sod. This behaviour has caused much damage recently in our community. If the grubs are controlled, then the digging will stop!

As we no longer have access to toxic chemicals that would kill the grubs in the soil (and every other beneficial organism as well), we now rely on treating affected properties with **Insect Parasitic nematodes**. Insect parasitic nematodes (hereinafter referred to as “nematodes”) are small, round worms that complete part of their life cycle in insects. (For those of you wanting more information please see the web site:

<https://extension.colostate.edu/docs/pubs/insect/05573.pdf>).

Nematodes are entirely environment-friendly and can be applied by the homeowner. This is a simple process no more complicated than hand-watering lawns and gardens. Nematodes are available at Sheridan Nurseries in Markham. They are invisible to the naked eye, but are living organisms. They must be kept refrigerated and applied during specific conditions in order to survive and do their nasty job of destroying grubs.

We appear to have both white grubs and leather jackets. They are the larvae of the Japanese beetle and the crane fly respectively. They are a wonderful food source for diggers such as racoons and skunks, hence the damage to lawns. But also, grubs are themselves inclined to dine on the tender roots of your favourite delicate garden plants.

Commercial lawn companies are able to apply nematodes, but in our experience, this is less satisfactory than homeowner’s applications as timing sunlight and moisture is critical. It is necessary that the entire property be treated at the same time: gardens and lawns all around the house are to be treated during one application. This is usually done twice a year – in early May and late August /early September for the first two years; and once a year in the fall to maintain the property grub-free. When done right, it really works!

LAWN AND GARDEN

CURRENT ISSUES ON PRIVATE PROPERTIES and HOMEOWNER RESPONSIBILITIES

Homeowner Gardens:

It is the sole responsibility of homeowners to keep the gardens surrounding their homes in an aesthetically acceptable condition, beyond the routine work that Melfer does to maintain them. The private gardens adjacent to our homes were planted by the developer some ten or so years ago. Most plants have a limited life span. Some gardens in our condo are looking a bit tired this spring, (some even sporting some quite dead-looking, or overgrown and crowded plants). Dead, diseased or overgrown plant materials must be replaced by the homeowner. **A homeowner may retain any landscape company on a private basis in order to get the job done.** The Landscape Committee members are always available to assist with some planning of any changes. We can be reached at Landscape1193@gmail.com.

An Alteration Request is needed ONLY if the plants proposed are NOT on the Approved Plant Lists that are on our website at (Plant Lists in the Landscaping Standards and Guidelines section on the [Condo 5 web page](#)). Please also remember that gardens are standard in both their shape and size and may not be reconfigured or enlarged as per our condo rules.

Extra Services Available from Melfer:

For a fee, and on a private basis, homeowners can retain Melfer Maintenance to perform the following services:

- Deliver and /or spread topsoil or manure for your property.
- Repair any damage to lawns that has been caused by pests digging for grubs.
- Lawn aeration using machinery that lifts out small plugs of soil in order to stimulate grass growth in the spring.
- Refresh or replace your tired or overgrown garden plantings.

For a quote, contact Rosana Coelho, Melfer's Garden Supervisor, at (905) 640-5111, or email her at rcoelho@melfer.ca.

TREE CARE

SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE CONDO

By Melfer Maintenance

- **Tree well enlargement**

The tree wells or saucers of a select number of our best specimen evergreen trees in the common areas, will be enlarged by Melfer in order to prevent mechanical damage to the bottom branches of trees by lawn maintenance equipment.

By Bartlett Tree Experts

Fertilizing:

- 150 trees on Condo 5 common property, selected by Bartlett, will be fertilized to meet the specific requirements of the species. Treatment can include macro and micronutrients, soil conditioners and beneficial soil microbes that promote health of both soils and landscape plants. Mycorrhizal inoculants, used in this application, contain beneficial microorganisms that stimulate root growth, increase water and nutrient absorption and help protect plant roots from disease.

Pest Control:

- All trees and shrubs located on Condo 5 property are monitored for insect and mite pests, diseases and cultural problems, which could impact plant health. Key pests include pear trellis rust and needle cast.

- **Spraying:**

- All Chanticleer pear trees are sprayed for pear trellis rust.
- Selected common property trees are sprayed three times for needle cast.

- **Root Invigoration and Soil Conditioning:**

Twenty of the most stressed trees on common property are selected by Bartlett for root invigoration. This treatment involves the use of an “air spade” to cultivate the soil within a radius of one meter from the tree trunk, to a depth of six to eight inches. Cultivation incorporates some or all of the following:

- Compost and other amendments per soil analysis report
- Mulch applied to an approximate depth of 1-4 inches to the treated area following cultivation
- Organic matter from degraded mulch mixed into the soil during cultivation
- Biochar added to the soil during cultivation.

This treatment improves soil health and promotes root development and function.

(As the various treatments are all weather dependent, there is no announcement that the crews are on hand to perform their work.)

TREE CARE

SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE CONDO

By The Landscape Committee

Monitoring

- All trees continuously monitored during the growing season.

Record Keeping

- Detailed records maintained for all common area as well as homeowner trees.

Contractor Liaison

- Bartlett's representative will be accompanied during inspections of both common and private property trees in the spring and fall.
- Liaise with tree installers to coordinate the planting of new and replacement trees for the common gardens.
- Advise Melfer Management about garden issues and problems.
- Monitor garden renovation activities: plant removal and garden renovation in the fall, as well as, selection and planting those gardens in the spring.

Board/Homeowner Liaison

- Identification as to what work needs to be done in order to keep our trees in good condition, and make recommendations to the Board on a regular basis.
- Communicate through the Board and Management, Bartlett's recommendations on the removal and treatment of private property trees.
- Respond to homeowners' questions about trees (You can always reach us at landscape1193@gmail.com).

TREE CARE

CURRENT ISSUES ON PRIVATE PROPERTIES and HOMEOWNER RESPONSIBILITIES

TREE ISSUES AND SOLUTIONS

Fertilizing and pruning:

Homeowners with currently healthy trees are encouraged to retain an arborist of their choice to fertilize and use preventative spraying measures in order to keep their own trees beautiful. While many people show much concern over their lawns, their trees are often taken for granted! They are a valuable asset to any property and do need special care in view of global warming and the rise of previously unknown, invasive, or infrequent pests, and infections.

Tree pruning also falls in the category of optional tree care for homeowners. On a private basis, homeowners are encouraged to discuss the possible need for pruning their trees by a certified arborist. Please refer to the link (<https://www.hotg.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/PRUNING.pdf>) to an article by Bartlett Tree Experts on pruning trees. Of course, homeowners may wish to retain their own arborist.

Japanese beetles:

For the last few years, we have suffered Japanese beetle invasions that defoliated some of our lovely Linden trees. While this was a real concern, there is not much our arborist can do to get rid of them. An insecticide spray will only cause the beetles to fly off and come right back again. So it became obvious that using a garden hose spray on a frequent basis was just as effective to mechanically remove these insects from trees. Beetle traps are available from Sheridan Nurseries and have been used successfully by some homeowners. However, since this infestation comes and goes in cycles of 2-3 years at a time, let's hope that the current cycle of the beetles has run its course and is done.

Tree wells:

Homeowners who own beautiful mature evergreens are urged to have their tree saucers enlarged. This is recommended because once branches have been damaged, it is an opportunity for infections to set in. As well, purely from an aesthetic reason, a tree looks best with a saucer proportionate to its size. The saucer should be at least at the dripline of the tree -- that is at the tip of the lower branches. Melfer Maintenance is available upon request, and on a private basis to enlarge these tree saucers.

Cutting off tree limbs:

This is best done by an arborist and ***only when needed as with totally dead branches***. Above all **PLEASE** do not trim the bottom branches of your evergreen trees! It simply ruins their lovely graceful, natural form. This has been done in the berm gardens of the Ring Road and the result is nothing short of disaster -- not only aesthetically, but also due to the potential infection risk to that tree. Evergreens are meant to have their bottom branches just a few inches above the ground--- *not trimmed up four feet off the ground! Ugh!*

Email Sent April 7th 2020

York Region Vacant Land Condominium Corporation 1193

April 7, 2020

Dear Resident:

RE: Landscaping Melfer COVID-19 Announcement

Good Morning Everyone,

This is to acknowledge and confirm that Melfer is considered an “essential service” and to assure you that we will be continuing to provide services under our existing contracts during this COVID-19 pandemic.

We recognize that many challenges and adjustments lie ahead of us to ensure the safety of both our employees and the communities that we service in order to carry out these responsibilities.

I am attaching a letter outlining the protocol we will be using to ensure the safety of everyone under these current conditions.

Please keep in mind that as a result of the current situation and the modifications we will be required to enforce, our responsibilities will continue be implemented effectively but potentially at a slower pace.

We would like to thank both the board and the homeowners for their understanding during this unique time.

Sincerely,

MELFER PROPERTY MAINTENANCE INC.

Andrew Gibson,

Maintenance Manager

P.S. For the residents who cannot open the attachment, below is the content:

AN IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT TO OUR CLIENTS

In the face of continued social distancing, using your outdoor space will become critical this year and we know that you're relying on us to continue to serve you, even as COVID-19 continues its spread through communities.

With increased public safety measures in place to protect against the spread of COVID-19, Melfer is taking its own proactive measures to remain operational while mitigating public health risks associated with this virus.

We would like you to know that all summer landscaping and gardening services will continue as close to normal as possible. Based on the currently evolving situation, we will continue to prepare as planned and remain flexible in adjusting to this evolving situation for the 2020 Spring/Summer seasons.

The health and wellbeing of our staff and our clients has always been important to us. We are implementing additional measures to establish even more rigorous protocols to allow for the following:

1. Personal interactions with clients will be kept to a minimal.
2. All employees will be instructed to observe and comply with social distancing requirements at all times.
3. Paper and in-person communications with clients will be kept to a minimal.
4. Our vehicles will operate on a staggered basis so that staff may travel to and from worksites in a safe and properly distanced manner with limited physical interactions between workers.
5. All staff will be instructed to self-monitor for symptoms and to immediately report any changes in health.
6. We will promptly work with local public health authorities to identify and support colleagues who are required to self-isolate. They will be required to stay home.
7. Customer service staff will be encouraged to work remotely wherever possible.
8. If you wish to reach out to us during this unprecedented situation, please reach out to your property manager.

We know you will understand and appreciate the extraordinary measures we are taking to protect our staff and our clients as we navigate this challenging situation together.

On behalf of the entire team at Melfer Property Maintenance Group, it is our sincere wish that you and your loved ones remain safe and healthy.

We thank you for making us a part of your every day and we look forward to serving you soon.

R. Liderri

Robert Liderri, President

Andrew Gibson

Andrew Gibson, Maintenance Mgr

Email Sent July 14th, 2019

Timely Tree Care Messages for Homeowners July 13th 2019

Linden tree leaf loss

This is due mainly to the current hot weather. The cool wet spring earlier also brought on a few fungal diseases that cause premature defoliation. The trees should bounce back from this, just keep them hydrated (watered) during dry spells.

Defoliated Crabapple trees

Your Crabapple tree is likely suffering from Anthracnose infection. The disease has gone rampant after the cool/wet spring, resulting in pre-mature leaf drop in a majority of Silver Maple and Crabapple trees. The trees should bounce back from this even if it gets defoliated - they will usually put out another growth spurt after complete leaf loss. Hopefully the weather cooperates now, but if it starts to get dry and doesn't rain for prolonged periods of time, please make sure trees stay hydrated.

Use of a **low middle number (phosphorus) fertilizer** to assist trees during this stress period is also recommended. Sprinkle 14-7-14 granular tree and shrub fertilizer (available at Sheridan Nurseries), make sure it is well tilled into soil around the base of the tree for quicker absorption, might assist the tree in leaf regeneration.

Above information was supplied by Bartlett Tree Experts

GRUB ALERT UPDATE SPRING 2019!

Last fall, some homeowners sustained considerable damage to their lawns and gardens due to grubs being dug up by raccoons. Grubs can also cause losses of smaller perennials as they will eat up the roots and kill these treasured plants, especially if they are recent acquisitions in your garden and do not yet have a strong root system.

We appear to have two different kinds of grubs in the area: one is the white grub which is the larva of the Japanese Beetle that we had as unwelcomed visitors last summer, and the other is the Leatherjacket grub which is the larva of the “Crane Fly” that was numerous and quite evident late last summer as well in our area.

This problem unfortunately will not be resolved by the winter snows as the life cycle is at least two years.

So what can be done this year?

Unfortunately, no chemicals are currently available to us that will easily eliminate these problems. Since the introduction of more stringent laws regarding the control of domestic lawn pests, we can no longer rely on harsh chemicals to suppress or eliminate these pests as they are also detrimental to all the “good” life in our soils.

The only treatment currently acceptable is nematodes that are specific to the particular grub. Nematodes are a very tiny living organism that destroy the grubs when they are introduced in a lawn or garden. They are applied as a solution in water which is sprayed onto the affected area. This treatment is effective and environmentally friendly.

We have alerted our lawn care company of this problem already, so that this spring, the nematodes can be applied for BOTH TYPES OF GRUBS. This treatment with nematodes will have to be done spring and fall at specific times in order to be effective and will need to be continued for at least two years, in order to bring this infestation under control.

Also, for those who wish to do so, property owners can easily apply a nematode treatment on their own property—both lawns and gardens come this spring, in late April or May. They are available from Sheridan Nurseries, and their expert staff will give excellent instructions as to how to go about controlling grubs. You will have to tell them that you may have BOTH white grubs and Leatherjackets, and they will supply you with the appropriate nematodes.

Should you have any further concerns or questions, please contact the Landscape Committee at landscape1193@gmail.com

Updated April 2019 (original August 4th, 2018)

BACKGROUND AND UPDATE ON CARE OF TREES AND COMMON GARDENS IN CONDO 5

The following timeline should be of interest to all homeowners, whether they are recent arrivals, or have owned a home here for several years:

- ✚ In April 2011 Schickedanz, the developer, handed over the Condo 5 development to its owners, and we were incorporated as York Region Vacant Land Condominium Corporation 1193. We elected our first Board of Directors, and the Committees who serve the Board were appointed.
- ✚ Meanwhile, construction of the last homes in Condo 5 took place during 2011-2012 and the final grading and landscaping were also completed on common properties as well as on the remainder of homes during the fall of 2012.
- ✚ In the two or so years following, we began to notice that our trees were not looking healthy and could possibly be diseased. The Board of Directors at that time retained Davey Tree Care to assess our tree health and to begin some tree care.
- ✚ In November 2014 with the disease still spreading amongst our trees, Davey Tree Care was replaced by the current company, Bartlett Tree Experts.
- ✚ By the spring of 2015, Bartlett had begun to fertilize some of the common area trees, and to spray for Pear Rust Trellis disease prevention on all our pear trees, as well as for Needle Cast disease on all Colorado spruce trees. Trees in common areas as well as trees on homeowners' properties were treated in order to try to stem the spread of these diseases.
- ✚ To allow us to effectively monitor individual trees, each tree in our condo was catalogued with its own tag number. This major project still serves us well today as we can readily identify a tree as to its location and its problems.
- ✚ Similarly, all our common gardens were catalogued - a square marker in the ground with a number on it identifies each garden.
- ✚ In spite of all our efforts, our trees are still afflicted and we have lost many thus far. It is important to remember that it takes two years from time of infection before the disease begins to show on the tree. Thus, no one could have predicted the severity of the problem until just the year before last.
- ✚ While some have questioned the efficacy of spraying and treatment of our trees and have been outraged at the rate of infection, we must remember that the Needle Cast fungus is everywhere around us, and not just in Ballantrae. It has been seen throughout York region, and exists well beyond. While the exact causes are not known, there are many factors contributing to the spread of this destructive disease. These include overcrowding, monoculture (*planting too many of one type of tree*), poor soil conditions, poor drainage, the use of tree stock that was stressed or diseased to begin with, as well as global warming. Unfortunately, we have all these conditions here in Condo 5!

- ✚ To compound problems of communications with regards to landscape care, we have had no fewer than five new condo managers. None of these condo managers have had any experience with the management of plant materials, so each has had to be familiarized with all of our horticultural problems.

Recently, in light of our history, and following further research and deliberation by the Board and the Landscape Committee, we have determined the following to be our best plan going forward:

- ✚ We will continue to have Bartlett Tree Experts care for all our trees – those in common areas as well as on homeowner properties. They will continue to monitor, advise, and treat the trees by the spraying program as per our contract with them.
- ✚ We removed 45 badly diseased and dead Colorado spruce trees from the common gardens in 2017, and 45 more were removed last year. We will have to continue to remove diseased trees until we are reasonably free of the Needle Cast infection. For the reasons stated above, Needle Cast disease has been largely responsible for the loss of trees to-date. It is a very persistent fungus disease that is difficult to eradicate. And there is NO QUICK FIX.
- ✚ Some homeowners had diseased trees that were earmarked for removal. Several have agreed that if they wish to try to save a tree by retaining another tree care company at their own expense to treat it by spraying, fertilizing and aerating, they will be allowed to do so until such time as the tree either recovers completely or, in the opinion of the tree care company retained by the condominium it shows such signs of decline that it becomes necessary to remove it. We must bear in mind that in doing so, there remains the possibility that the fungus from these infected trees can still spread to the rest of our trees. The rate of recovery, if successful, could be as slow as 3 to 7 years, and the treatment must continue throughout that period in order to be successful.
- ✚ Homeowners who have chosen to have their diseased trees treated privately are asked to please send a copy of their paid invoice from the tree care company they have retained for our condo records. Copies of such invoices should be sent to Kelly at FSR.
- ✚ We will continue to assess on an on-going basis both the status of all trees in Condo 5 as well as the treatment from Bartlett and other tree care companies.
- ✚ As we lose trees to disease, we will re-install trees of different species in order to have a more varied selection of trees that is more desirable for disease control. This is an expensive exercise, and we cannot say at this time just how many trees will be replaced and when. One exception is the replacement of common area trees that directly impact homeowners' privacy. In these cases, we plan to install new trees in these locations as soon as it is possible.
- ✚ With regards to the timing of applications of the fungicide sprays, Kelly will continue to advise us by email of upcoming visits by Bartlett.

✚ On a related landscape note, the common gardens receive a full inspection on a yearly basis by Melfer, Kelly and a member of the Landscape Committee. Any dead or diseased shrubs will be marked for removal. Due to the level of expenditure we are currently undertaking just to get our trees healthy, the common gardens will undergo only modest improvements for the foreseeable future. The poorest-looking gardens will be re-landscaped first. HOWEVER, should any homeowner observe that a particular shrub or plant needs attention, we would ask you to PLEASE report it by emailing either Kelly DaSilva at kelly.dasilva@fsresidential.com or the Landscape Committee at landscape1193@gmail.com to report these poor specimens indicating the number of the common garden where these are found. The appropriate corrective action will be taken. *No one should have to look at dead plant material!!* This is also one small contribution any homeowner can easily make towards a better-looking set of gardens for our community.

Finally, we can appreciate your frustrations with our landscape issues and in time they will be resolved. We believe the removal of diseased plant matter and its replacement with fresh healthy specimens will soon allow us to achieve the look we all would like to see in Condo 5. We appreciate your understanding and your patience.

Condo 5 Board of Directors

**TO BE SAVED IN THE EVENT OF A RETURN OF THIS PROBLEM but
PROBABLY NO NEED TO PUBLISH AT THIS TIME**

Updated April 2019

An uninvited guest — The Japanese Beetle

Last year we were visited by an unusually large number of this flying insect. As they were chewing the leaves of our lovely Linden trees, this infestation caused some concern to many homeowners. Should they return this summer, the following facts should reassure you:

- While they are unsightly, the Japanese beetles will NOT kill your tree.
- The damage done to the trees' leaves by chewing that causes the "lacy" effect on infested trees is not permanent as it only affects this year's growth.
- If a tree is sufficiently defoliated, it will even put on a new growth surge to keep alive.
- Linden trees are known to be very tough trees in the first place.
- The trees will produce healthy new leaves next spring.
- The life cycle of these beetles is 40 days, after which they will largely disappear.
- In a warm climate, the beetles will have lived out their entire life cycle in one season. In cooler climates, it will take it two years to complete this cycle. How we will fare is anyone's guess.
- Bartlett can conduct a spray of the Linden trees to assist in partly eradicating the beetles, but maintain firmly that it is impossible to completely get rid of them by spraying. "They are very hard to control" states our arborist.
- Pheromone traps may not even be helpful as they tend to attract even more beetles to that site and therefore are not recommended by Bartlett. The infestation simply has to run its course.