Proper Watering & Water Retention

The summer heat can take a beating on our plants. The most important way to keep them healthy is to water them properly. It is just as important to make sure the plants are getting enough water as it is to make sure they aren’t getting too much water.

Most plants don’t like to stay wet (overwatered). Though it is hot, watering every day or before the soil has time to dry will keep the roots wet and cause a decline in the plants. For a lot of small to medium sized plants checking the soil with your finger can help you decide if the soil has dried out or not. On the other hand, if the soil becomes bone dry (under watered) or is watered infrequently this will cause a great amount of stress on a plant as well.

So how do we determine how much is too much or not enough? Well this will depend on few factors: Is it in the ground or in a pot? Is it in full sun, part sun, or shade? How big is the root system? Is the soil taking too long to dry out or is it drying too quickly?

*Pot v.s. In ground*:

Plants that are potted in the ground are typically going to require less water than if they were in a pot. Plants in pots tend to dry out faster than if planted in the ground.

*Sun v.s. Shade*:

It is pretty apparent that the more hours of direct sunlight a plant gets the faster the soil will dry out. Plants in full sun will require more water than plants of the same size in partial sun or mostly shade.

*Small v.s. Large*:

When watering plants of various size it is good to take into account that a large shrub or tree won’t have to be watered as often BUT will require a larger amount of water, compared to small plants that would be watered more often BUT don’t need as much water.

*Other tips and tricks*:

Some issues with potted plants are that they dry out too quickly; we have a few products at the store you can use to help retain moisture in the soil. These include: **Soil Moist Granules**, **Coco Coir**, or Fox Farm’s **Strawberry Fields Potting soil**.

When planting in ground there are two ways of keeping the soil from staying too wet and too dry at the same time. **Expanded shale** will allow water to drain properly but also retains moisture that the plants can pull as the soil dries. Also, by putting down a **2”-3” layer of mulch** this will keep the soil cooler and help retain moisture.

For more information or if you have any questions feel free to come in to Buchanan’s and ask any of our wonderful staff for advice!