

## **9 Tips to Prepare Your Lawn, Landscape, and Garden for Hurricane Season – Northern Virginia**

The 2022 Atlantic hurricane season officially begins on June 1 and last until Nov. 30. NOAA is forecasting 2022 as the 7<sup>th</sup> straight “[above average hurricane season](#)”. Forecasters are expecting 14 to 21 named storms this season with 10 of them forecasted to become hurricanes. In fact, the National Hurricane Center is already tracking the [first potential storm of the 2022 season!](#) So, now is the time to prepare your yard, gardens and landscapes for possible inclement weather.

Here are some tips to make sure you are ready for high winds and heavy downpours that accompany these weather events.

### **1. Inspect Trees & Shrubs**

Check your trees and shrubs for rot, and dead branches and roots. Since these dead branches can be lifted by high winds and cause damage to surrounding homes and other structures, consider removing them soon. If you have any dead trees/shrubs, have them removed by a qualified professional.

**Pro Tip:** Do not cut off large, healthy branches and work hard to create the smallest wounds possible on your trips for long term health of your trees.

### **2. Prune Plants Early**

Prune any plants within a couple of feet of your home early in the season rather than waiting till a storm is imminent. This is a good way to ensure a contractor will be available to tend to your needs and you won't end up with any branches that can become potential projectiles during the storm.

### **3. Inspect Drainage Areas**

It's imperative to keep drainage areas clear during heavy storms. To prevent any blockage(s), consider removing any/all debris, including grass clippings, leaves, and other types of yard debris.

### **4. Plan Your Garden**

Choosing the appropriate trees and plants can be a great way to ensure long term safety and health of your yard. Consider planting trees that are more resistant to higher winds and select plants that can grow together to create a dense root system where the roots can intertwine to create a strong network.

### **5. Secure Mulch**

Mulch can often get washed away by heavy rains and winds. To prevent this from happening, secure mulch by placing a barrier.

## **6. Inspect and Clean Gutters**

Make sure your gutters are clear of leaves, branches and other debris so water moves away from your home in heavy rains, and check that all gutters are securely fastened to the house. Also, considering placing pavers or other stones under downspouts to prevent soil erosion.

## **7. Turn-off Sprinklers**

Turn off automatic irrigations systems during the week of a storm. Hurricanes bring high amount of water which can promote disease and thus is not good for plant roots. With all the rain, the last thing the yard will need is more water.

## **8. Secure Loose Yard Items**

Be sure that loose items secured. These include yard furniture, tools, chemicals, hanging plants, and planters. If you have rain barrels and compost bins, be sure to also secure them before the storm. For rain barrels that are full, leave the spigot open and disconnect any gutters and hoses attached to them.

## **9. Harvest Vegetables**

If you have a vegetable garden, harvest anything you can. If flooding occurs and vegetables remain underwater, they are likely to spoil.

Stay ahead of the storms and check weather regularly. Stay safe out there.