

The Scoop  
Newsletter from the Gateway Garden Club  
Preparing your tools for Winter

As the growing season comes to an end, we need to think about how we should store our equipment so it will be in good condition next Spring when we will need them again.

1. Hand tools – Clean off the dirt and plant materials that are stuck to them. If they are dull, then take time to sharpen them and then oil them to prevent any rusting or damage from being damp over the winter months. Storage of these tools is important. The tool storage racks to hang your tools on is great. If you do not have racks to hang your hoe, potato fork, or other hand tools, then it is best to hang them upside down in a tall storage can. The metal part does not need to touch the ground, garage or basement floor. The moisture in the floor will cause damage to your tools.

2. The mower – Do not just give your lawn the last cut of the season and let the mower sit in the garage or basement until you will need it again. It is best to drain the gas out of the tank, fuel lines and carburetor. To do this let the mower run until it is completely out of gas. Also, while it is still warm take out the crank case plug and let all the oil drain out, then refill with fresh oil. Disconnect spark-plug wire carefully and pour 2-3 spoonfuls of oil down through the hole, then replace the spark plug but leave the wire disconnected. Clean the outside by scraping off clippings and dirt, rinse the screening of the air cleaner on top of the engine in gasoline and clean out any sediment in the oil cup at the bottom of the filter. Replace and add a little clean oil to the filter and cup. Coat chains and drive sprockets with oil and lubricate all moving parts. Remove grass wrapped around the blades and underneath the frame. Clean and check blades to see if they need sharpening. Now is a good time to sharpen the blades and adjust them for balance for level mowing. Also check the belts, pulleys and chains to see if they need replacing. It is good to put your mower on blocks so the machine is supported by the frame and the tires are clear of the ground if it is not in a shed or garage. Also wrap it with plastic to keep out dust and moisture.

The Gateway Garden Club is a federated member of the National Garden Club and the Garden Club of Kentucky. For more information contact Becky Oliver at 270-522-3150