

BULLETIN BOARD

GREEN INFORMANT SPECIALS

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Sign up for our weekly mowing service and get your last cut free. Also sign up by March 31, 2012 and receive monthly edging free for the 2012 season! New clients only please.

FREE Perimeter Pest

Spiders, ants and other creepy crawlers working their way into the house. Sign up for our Perimeter Pest program by March 31, 2012 and get the last visit FREE. New clients only please.

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P.O. Box 190
Grand Ledge, MI 48837



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Contact us!

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Winter 2012

THE GREEN INFORMANT

Specialists in Turfgrass and Landscape Commercial and Residential ■ State Certified Technicians

(517) 627-9669 ■ Fax (517) 626-2645 ■ www.lawntechofmi.com

A YEAR OF NEW BEGINNINGS

ARE YOU A WINNER?

Lawn Tech is awarding our loyal customers by offering a *Customer Loyalty Giveaway*. In each quarterly newsletter, look for your customer number in the prize box. If your customer number is posted you could win a FREE Perimeter Pest Program from Lawn Tech!

If your customer number is listed, call or email our office to confirm and your name will be entered into the drawing. Each drawing will have a deadline, so be sure to read every issue.

Congratulations to Pat & Kristen Ebert of Haslett for winning the fall giveaway of a Holiday Wreath from Lawn Tech!

2012 CUSTOMER GIVEAWAYS

Winter 2012
FREE Perimeter Pest Program
Spring 2012
Lawn Tech Cooler Packed With Summertime Enjoyment
Summer 2012
100 Tulip Bulbs Planted by Lawn Tech
Fall 2012
Holiday Wreath

IN THIS ISSUE . . .

- Tar Spots on Maples
- Oak Caterpillar
- G.I. Specials Board
- Homeshow coupon!

"A year of new beginnings" seems to be the slogan for Lawn Tech as we enter the new year of 2012. As many of us hear this saying a lot this time of year, it is really our behind the scenes slogan.

Our weed and feed service, the core offering to our clients, will be at the forefront of our marketing efforts. It's not that we have never marketed this service, but we have had our hands in many jars over the years to meet the needs of our clients. With the tides turning in this economic circus, we are making an effort to stick to the core services that have gotten us to where we are today. With that said, we still want to bid your landscape projects and related landscape needs, but we will be doing some different scheduling and service work options in 2012.

We have included a special referral coupon sheet in this issue. Please pass these coupons on to friends and family you know who may benefit from our weed and feed services and earn some green of your own in the process!

Lawn Tech is again raising money to support the Michigan Turfgrass Foundation and its efforts to raise funds to support turfgrass research at Michigan State University. 100% of the donation goes directly to the professors at MSU. If you choose to prepay for your lawn services for 2012, a \$1.00 donation will be made on your behalf. If you choose not to donate, simply deduct \$1.00 from the prepay offer. You can also visit <http://www.michiganturfgrass.org> to find out more about MTF.

We know there were many tree issues last season with the extreme weather we had. Tar spot on maples, fungus findings on blue spruce and early leaf drop in maples. Tree care is all about prevention, not immediate curing. If you would like to learn the cost of aiding the health of your trees and shrubs, please call our office and we can provide you the options and costs.

Lawns last season also suffered summer heat stress and possible decline. Early summer or fall are great times to core aerate and overseed your lawn to help rebuild these thin areas. If you would like to have these services done, simply check it off on your prepay renewal or contact us with any questions you may have. Core aeration followed by overseeding with the right seed will make a difference.

As always, visit our website for more information on the services we offer and other lawn and landscape information.

The staff and I look forward to again being on your lawn and providing the quality service you have come to expect. We hope you contact us with your questions, concerns or compliments so that we may always stay on the cutting edge of turfgrass!

See You on the Turf!

Dan Boak

Dan Boak
President

**PREPAY DEADLINE IS FEBRUARY 28, 2012.
SAVE SOME GREEN!**

LATE FALL OAK CATERPILLAR CAUSING NUISANCE

Published October 10, 2011 - Russell Kid, MSU Extension

Got tiny caterpillars dangling down on threads and laying tiny, white, rice-like cocoons everywhere? Sounds like you have a bad case of oak skeletonizer!

Ordinarily, tree insects are not very active this late in the autumn just prior to leaf fall, but there is one insect that is very abundant this fall and creating a lot of nuisance for many homeowners. It's called the oak skeletonizer.

If you have seen a lot of very tiny, greenish caterpillars (about 3/8- to 1/2-inch long) dangling down out of trees on a thin thread of silk, it's very likely it is the oak skeletonizer. Certain portions of the northern Lower Peninsula are exhibiting large populations of this insect. While this insect does not cause a great deal of harm to oak trees, it is more of a public nuisance between the caterpillars crawling around on people who "catch" them walking outside or from the tiny, whitish cocoons resembling small grains of rice that they deposit on many outdoor surfaces from vegetation to outdoor furniture and decks to even automobiles parked under trees.

What people are experiencing is actually the second generation of this insect this growing season. There was an earlier first generation that hatched in mid-summer. Oak skeletonizer is a native insect to our

oak-dominated forest ecosystems. As such, peak populations occur every five years or so, but collapse down to lower population levels after a season or two. Because oak skeletonizer has evolved over time with our forest, there are natural predators, parasites and weather factors that eventually cause populations to fall.

If you were to look up into the canopy of an oak tree, it is possible to spot the leaf damage caused by these insects. Many oak leaves still attached to the tree will transmit sunlight right through the feeding damage on the leaf surface caused by this caterpillar – almost as if looking through "tiny windows."

Unfortunately, there is really no control recommended for this insect, especially this late in the growing season. Removing the cocoons from this oak skeletonizer can be quite difficult at times. So many homeowners will likely just have to "grin and bear it" and wait for populations to collapse. In all reality, this insect is really more of a "people-problem" (i.e., nuisance) than it is a threat to tree health.

Related resource: *Common Oak Defoliators in Michigan (It's not always Gypsy Moth!)*, MSU Extension bulletin E2633

WHEN TO CONTROL TAR SPOTS ON MAPLES

Published August 26, 2011 — Jan Byrne, MSU Diagnostic Services, Dept. of Plant Pathology

Although tar spot symptoms are readily visible now, pause for a moment to consider the overall impact on tree health and appropriate chemical management.

Signs and symptoms of tar spot are becoming more noticeable on maples in the landscape. Initially, the lesions are yellowish in appearance, and by the end of the season they take on a shiny, black appearance, hence the name "tar spot." The appearance of the spots is alarming to some. In some cases, severe disease will result in premature leaf drop. However, the health of large, well-established trees that are otherwise healthy will not be significantly impacted.

For those interested in chemical control recommendations, now is not the time. The lesions visible now are a result of infections that occurred earlier in the grow-

ing season. Fungicide applications made now will not limit disease severity. Fungicide recommendations are limited to spring applications of maples in commercial production, those with particular aesthetic importance, or perhaps those that were recently transplanted. Furthermore, regardless of the timing, it is typically not practical to treat large landscape trees with foliar fungicide applications.

For more details on this disease please see the MSU Extension News for Agriculture article, *why do my maple leaves have spots?!*



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SPRING WEED HELP!

Spring is a great time to get a head start on the weeds in your beds as well as your lawn. Lawn Tech can help you with our Granular Bed Weed Control and Fertilizer application. We can put down a preventative barrier after you have finished planting or mulching to prevent summer weeds from germinating. Pricing starts at \$40.00. Call Curt today to schedule.

LAWN TECH PRIZE BOX

If your customer number is posted, call our office by February 28, 2012 to be entered into the drawing for a FREE Perimeter Pest Program! Customer numbers:

17258 17133 11513 5126 5049 17147 5185 5460 6364 11345 17132 11503 11441 4697
 11145 2476 4622 6137 11562 11559 17213 1945 5284 2042 5231 24021 17284 6408
 2463 5328 11489 5690 5791 11247 11362 6354 6319 6380 4827 6440 9061 4613
 4612 3927 5792 7918 2615 7296 5121 5582 5693 4455 4787 10245 4370 4341
 10787 2634 11301 10633 5422 3822 4483 5209 8578 9348 11316 4331 4330 4332
 5424 9689 3613 4662 9032 8590 9927 8891 9189 4603 4307 4598 10481 1955

THE SURVEY SAYS . . .

All of our clients receive our year-end survey with the last service of the season. Have you ever wondered about the results? For the 2011 season, we received 85 responses out of 800 plus customers. Of those 85 customers, 69% rated Lawn Tech's lawn service at a "10", which is the highest on the scale. The remaining results are noted in the chart below. Thank-you for allowing Lawn Tech to serve you! Total of 85 responses:

SCORING	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
10	59	69%
9	17	20%
8	8	10%
7	1	1%

MSU HOME SHOW

The MSU Home show is March 15-18, 2012. Current clients can visit us at Booth #1218. Bring this coupon to the booth and receive a FREE gift from Lawn Tech, as well as entry into a drawing for a FREE Perimeter Pest Program for 2012. It's our way of saying "Thank -you" for your support!