

HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

Low-Maintenance Lawn Care For All Four Seasons

(NAPSA)—Your lawn and garden provide visitors with their first impression of your home, so it's important to keep the yard looking good year-round. Senior horticulturist for the National Gardening Association Charlie Nardoizzi offers these easy tips for keeping your lawn attractive throughout the year:

- **Water Wisely**—Water your lawn in the morning before the heat of the day. This allows grass to drink up water before it evaporates in the hot sun, and plants will be dry by evening, which is when diseases tend to thrive. It's also a good idea to water the lawn for longer periods of time less frequently so the water seeps into the roots of the grass. If you have in-ground lawn sprinklers, have them cleaned yearly so they continue to spread water evenly and do not leak.

- **Keep Weeds Out**—To help reduce the number of weeds in your yard, consider applying a 2- to 4-inch layer of organic mulch, such as shredded bark, bark chips or pine straw, to your flowerbeds. This will help reduce weeds around trees and shrubs and lessen the amount of water needed to keep your plants healthy.

- **Color Coordinate**—When planting a flower garden, choose colors based on the viewpoint of the observer. If people usually view your garden from a distance, like the street or sidewalk, use bright colors such as red, yellow and orange to draw people in. For close-up viewing from a deck or patio setting, choose pastel colors like blue, pink and white, as they are easier on the eyes.

- **War of the Roses**—If you like growing roses but don't like all the fuss, consider shrub roses like the Knockout rose, which is a beau-



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tiful, flowering shrub that requires minimal maintenance. This low-care selection blooms all summer, is winter-hardy and acquires very few pests and diseases.

- **Grow Up**—For gardening in small spaces, grow plants vertically to save room. Select vines and climbers to grow on a fence, trellis or wall. Some good selections include clematis, crossvine, Virginia creeper and honeysuckle. Be sure to provide strong support for the vines since some can grow to be quite large and heavy.

- **Take Care of Tools**—To extend the life of your garden tools and lawn-care implements, store them properly in an outdoor shed such as the Multi-Use Garden Shed from Lifetime Products. The shed will protect your gardening gear from outdoor elements like wind, rain and snow, and its internal shelving and hooks keep everything organized, so you won't have to spend time searching for the right tools.

For more tips on how to keep your yard beautiful year-round, visit www.lifetime.com.