



FALL WATER FEATURE MAINTENANCE

A chill in the air, shorter days and the beginnings of multi-colored leaves signifies a changing of the seasonal guard! Water features require special consideration when putting them to rest for the season. Here are some basic guidelines for fall maintenance:

- 1) **Install a Pond Net:** Installing a pond net will keep leaves out of your feature and make spring cleaning easier!
- 2) **IonGen System:** It is recommended to turn off the IonGen System in regional that have climates that experience cold temperatures. This will prevent elevated copper levels during the time of the year when there is no algae growth, and will prolong the life of the IonGen probe.
- 3) **Smart Pond Dosing System XT:** The XT System and liquid water treatments are not designed to be operated during freezing temperatures. The unit is equipped with an internal protection thermostat that will shut off the dosing pump at temperatures below 40°F / 4°C. Remove the control panel, treatment, and intake assembly during winter freezing temperatures and store in a frost-free location.
- 4) **Pond Aeration:** Pond aerators supply dissolved oxygen directly to ponds helping all biological processes and resulting in healthier fish and plants. Move your aeration system to an upper shelf in the winter months to allow for necessary de-gassing of the pond.
- 5) **Pond De-Icer:** Ideal for keeping a small opening in the ice during cold winter months to ensure proper gas exchange and help keep fish alive during the winter.
- 6) **PONDS ONLY - Shut the feature down:** Our recommendation is to shut the feature down for the season, especially if you are leaving town for any length of time. The check valve must be disconnected from the pump prior to shutting down. If this is not performed, there is a chance the check valve could freeze and break.
- 7) **Pondless Water Features:** These features are designed to be shut down whenever you like. Simply unplug the pump and put your feature to rest for the season.

Feeding your fish in the fall:

As the pond water begins to get colder, transition your fish to **Cold Water Fish Food**. This wheat germ-based fish food is ideal for this time of year. The food is easier to digest and will keep the fish healthy. In colder months, a fish's metabolism and the pond's ammonia-reducing biological activity is greatly diminished.

Stop feeding your fish when the water temperature falls below 50 degrees!

Helpful tips for maintaining your water feature during fall:

- Decaying leaves and foliage produce toxic gases that can harm your fish. Remove as much of the debris as possible.
- If you did not net your pond, you will need to remove the build-up of leaves from the bottom of the pond. Use a long-handled pond net to scoop them out. Check the skimmer basket and remove any leaves that remain.
- Add Cold Water Beneficial Bacteria to the pond once the temperature drops below 50 degrees. Use twice weekly for two weeks, and then once per week until the water starts to freeze.
- Stop fertilizing your aquatic plants after the first frost. This lets the plants know the season is coming to an end.
- Marginal aquatic plants - Trim these plants back to 2" above the water to keep the dead foliage from drooping over into the pond.
- Waterlilies - Trim back leaves and stems to 2-3" above the base of the plant. This keeps dead foliage from decomposing in the pond.
- Hardy waterlilies - If you left hardy waterlilies in their pot, drop them into the deepest part of the pond to over-winter. Do not bring them indoors as they need a period of dormancy.
- Tropical waterlilies – Bring these indoors if you want to over-winter them. Keep the pot in 50-degree water or take them out of the pot and store in sand. Be advised, even trained horticulturists lose a lot of tropical waterlilies when storing them indoors, so you might simply want to treat them as annuals.
- Once temperatures drop to 50 degrees, stop feeding your fish. They need to get ready to hibernate and you will want to avoid any metabolic complications. You can feed them Cold Water Fish Food until the temperature drops below 50 degrees.

A complete line of seasonal pond products can be found and ordered on our website,
www.aquascapes.com.