

Wild Winter Could Mean a Busy Spring



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This winter has been an unusual one. New England didn't receive as much snow as usual, and was spared from most of the big snowstorms that hit the East Coast and mid-Atlantic states, areas that aren't used to, or prepared for, such weather. Washington, D.C., which averages around 15.2 inches of snowfall per winter (according to AccuWeather.com) received close to 54.9 inches as of March 2 (The Washington Post). And, we could still see more.

What does that snow mean for landscape contractors and lawn care professionals?

For the companies that offer snow removal services, it was a big boost to their business after a couple of years of slow work, but the long-term effects of the messy weather could mean problems. Most of the areas hit with the snow aren't used to such harsh weather, so most of the plant varieties there can't survive cold temperatures or heavy snow. Small trees and shrubs are being strained by the weight of many inches of snow and could end up with snapped branches or other injuries. And, the damage to the turf could be detrimental. Walking on, or driving on, turf that is frozen or heavily frosted can break the blades of the grass and hurt the plant, leading to dead spots in spring. And, with massive amounts of snow being piled wherever there is room, diseases, such as snow mold may become a big concern. *Typhula blight*, a common snow mold fungi, is most severe when heavy snow falls on turf that isn't frozen yet, and remains on the turf for long periods of time, the same conditions that occurred in many parts of the country this winter.

These areas could also see a late start to the season, as it's going to take longer for all of that snow to melt, resulting in later spring cleanups, mulching and other jobs.

However, this could be the perfect combination for you to have a busy year, as gardens and landscapes were wiped out by the storms, and damaged properties will need to be restructured to what they once were. Your clients'

lawns are going to need some extra TLC this year, so make sure you're ready.