

# Spring Fever & the DIY Bug

**W**hile waiting patiently for spring to arrive in southeastern Wisconsin, one can't help but feel excitement for the annual "Yard Spruce Up".

Many NARI members are professional landscapers and don't really need too much guidance when it comes to creating outdoor spaces. But what about those plumbers, electricians and carpenters who have the DIY bug? While they are handy in their own right, they might not have that God-given "green thumb". Here are some tips and FAQs to help get started with that spring landscaping project.

## Where do I begin?

First evaluate the amount of space you have and what you want to do with the space (add a patio/deck, a fence, a flower

or vegetable garden). You will also need to budget how much time/money you will put into your landscaping project.

## Ok, I have my project but HOW do I start?

### 1 **Begin with hardscaping.**

Installation of a porch/deck, fencing, pathways can compact your soil, damage plants and your yard. It is best to construct these things first. This sets the framework to build the rest of the yard around.

### 2 **Working with the soil.**

Identify what type of soil you have and determine if it needs to be amended. Having good soil is an important foundation for your flower or vegetable garden, and even your lawn. If you have poor soil, don't fret. Soil can be enhanced with combinations



of compost and other organic material. More information on soil types can be found on the [USDA website](#).

### 3 **Choosing the right plants.**

Determine where the sun is coming from at various points of the day and for how long. Different plants require specific amounts of sunlight and certain levels of moisture. This will determine what species of plants can thrive in different areas of the yard.

If you plan to plant trees, take into consideration how large a tree will grow. Have enough space for the future, not just for the size it is now! Consider, too, the growth rate of species. Some trees grow faster than others.

**4 *Finishing touches.*** Make your yard yours! Add things you like water fountains, garden art/statues, pathways, a fire pit, or maybe a swing. The possibilities are endless! Create a place you want to be with family and friends.

***This is a lot of work...is it worth it?*** Good landscaping gives your home curb appeal, which increases the value of your home. Not one handy person will deny that is ALWAYS worth the effort.

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