

Gardening Department

Protecting Crape Myrtle in Winter

With their long blooming time and assortment of colors, crepe myrtles are very popular. Unfortunately, they can be damaged by severe winters, so some precautions should be taken. First, the use of probiotic fertilizer like Dr. Earth, in fall will naturally build up a plant's winter hardiness and strengthen the roots.

Second, a minimum of 3" layer of mulch should be applied over the root zone to insulate the roots from the cold. A 6" layer is more beneficial.

Thirdly, it might be advisable to "wrap" small crepe myrtles or first year trees. Burlap can be wrapped around the branches as insulating filler like straw or leaves can be used to provide protection. Bush jackets can be used for dwarf plants. These are insulating covers that cover the plant and can be used for multiple years.

It is also important to be sure your tree is given adequate water throughout the fall as this will encourage root growth.

