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Crazy for Color? Award-winning Landscaper Says There's a Right Way and a Wrong Way to Handle Spring Gardening Fever

Step away from the snapdragons, put down those petunias and take a deep breath!

Mark Seavers, owner of nationally recognized Seavers Landscape said a lot of people make impulsive decisions when spring is in the air. "They see the redbuds, the azaleas and the pear trees blossoming all over town, and they want to join in on the colorfest," said Seavers. "But I can't tell you how many times I get a call just a few weeks after a homeowner has spent a fortune putting colorful annuals in their yard. They're frustrated, because after investing a lot of time and money, they end up with a bunch of spent flowers that don't even make it to May.

Though it's tempting to run out to the local big box store and fill your cart with whatever is biggest and brightest, Seavers said homeowners should take stock of the realities of their own home landscape. "DON'T curb your gardening enthusiasm, but DO have a plan before you go crazy buying color." He recommends four steps to achieve healthy plants and long-lasting color:

Do a Soil Checkup: It's the "unsexy" part of the process, but it's essential in order to create the best possible growing environment. "You can't expect a plant to grow in poor quality, compacted soil that hasn't been enriched in the entire time you've owned your home. The first thing we do for our clients is determine the pH and nutrient content of the soil. Depending on the results, we add decomposed manure, rice hulls, bark mulches and other types of organic matter. Homeowners who want to do this themselves can buy testing kits at most nurseries."

Know Your Yard: Determine how much sun your beds are getting each day. Then think about the typical weather that we experience in The Woodlands area during the spring and summer months. "Almost every year, we have water restrictions during some part of the summer, said Seavers. "So putting in a bunch of tender annuals, like impatiens, which need constant watering, is just asking for trouble."

Go Local for Plant Purchases: When you're ready to buy, choose an independent nursery or locally-owned hardware store. "Their buyers have a better understanding of what grows in our area than those at the giant home and garden chains. They're going to have a better selection of perennials, native plants and hearty annuals that do well here. And they're better able to answer your questions," said



Seavers. “Go easy on the annuals. Use them in smaller, showy areas to maximize their impact. That way you can easily switch them out as the seasons change and their blooms wane.”

Ongoing Care: “There are very few plants that you can just stick in the ground and forget about,” said Seavers. “Everything you’ve purchased is going to need regular maintenance in order to thrive.” Seavers said that, from the outset, a homeowner needs to make a commitment to consistent care of beds, including fertilizing, pruning, trimming, mulching and deadheading spent blooms. “Be honest with yourself. If you’re not up to the task of prepping, planting and maintaining your home landscape, that’s where we come in. Our wealth of landscape, design and horticultural knowledge allows us to deliver effective and creative solutions for our clients,” said Seavers. “Whether with us or on their own, homeowners can make the right choices to turn spring fever into a beautiful landscape they’ll enjoy for many seasons to come.”

The experts at Seavers Landscape are available year-round for landscape design. For ideas and inspiration, visit www.seaverslandscape.com.

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