



BURKE COUNTY CENTER

RADIO TRANSCRIPT

Date: October 29, 2020
Subject: What to Prune & When to Prune
Agent: Donna Teasley

Hello, this is Donna Teasley, Horticulture Agent with the North Carolina Cooperative Extension, Burke Center.

I always get a lot of pruning questions during the fall so today we're going to talk about what to prune and when to prune. First let's talk about what to prune now. Most plants should not be pruned this late in the season. The only things that can be safely pruned now are bleeder trees such as maple, birch, dogwood or elm. These trees bleed a lot at certain times of the year when sap is high so waiting until the fall prevents excessive loss of sap. But all other trees and shrubs should be left alone! Pruning encourages new growth and in the event of an early freeze, tender new growth could be killed.

A good rule of thumb is that trees and shrubs that bloom early such as redbud and azalea should be pruned as soon as flowering is over and trees and shrubs that bloom in the summer such as crape myrtle and butterfly bush should be pruned early in January and February. Most evergreens should be pruned in early spring just before new growth starts. Most shade trees are best pruned in the winter. Any trees that are susceptible to fireblight should be pruned in the winter so that wounds are healed before spring growth starts.

If you would like a pruning calendar to remind you when your trees and shrubs should be pruned, call our office and we'll be happy to mail one out to you.

This Donna Teasley with the North Carolina Cooperative Extension, Burke Center. If you would like more information about this program, you can call us at 764-9480.