



HISTORIC

NEW ENGLAND **Construction: Protection of Gardens and Lawn Spaces**

*Defining the past. Shaping the future.*

**Property Care White Papers**

### **Construction: Protection of Gardens and Lawn Spaces**

Gardens and lawns are an important part of the overall interpretation of Historic New England's historic sites. Construction activities and the use of heavy equipment can adversely affect the lawn spaces and especially historic plantings in gardens and around the foundation of structures. Preservation of gardens and lawn spaces during construction requires careful planning and communication between Historic New England staff and the contractor.

### **Guidelines for Protecting Gardens and Landscapes during Construction**

- Review potential issues or damage during the planning process.
- Vehicle access, material storage and the use of equipment such as scaffolding or ladders can all affect the lawns and gardens. These activities should be restricted and closely monitored to ensure proper protection of the various resources.
- The use of tarps over lawns, shrubs and gardens provide excellent protection during a variety of projects (painting, cleaning, etc) however extended use of tarps can cause great damage as well.
- The various cleaning agents and chemicals that may be used during a project can also negatively affect the lawn, shrubs and gardens. Work may need to be preceded with a general wash and followed with thorough rinsing to ensure the complete elimination of the product.

### **Technical Information**

#### **Planning stage**

- Identify what spaces will be impacted by the necessary work and photograph appropriate areas for discussion and documentary purposes.
- Identify where underground septic tanks, oil tanks or other sensitive utilities to prevent damage to those systems.
- Avoid moving heavy equipment over locations with sensitive subsurface archeological resources.
- Discuss project with landscape staff at least two weeks before project begins and develop protection plan for team leader approval. This plan may include:
  - Description of expected impact construction activities will have to areas.
  - Inventory and photographs of garden beds and lawn spaces that will be disturbed.
  - Approach to protection resource on a daily and weekly basis.

## **Construction: Protection of Gardens and Lawn Spaces**

### Vehicles, Materials and Equipment

- Set equipment or scaffolding to avoid damaging plant material and/or grass.
- Keep heavy equipment out of the protected areas. Use boards or protective mats when vehicles or equipment move across lawn spaces.
- Eliminate or minimize foot traffic in the protected areas. Build temporary boardwalks if necessary.
- Prohibit the storage of building materials on lawns for an extended period of time.

### Use of Tarps

- Use stakes, props and supports when tarping over perennial and annual flower beds in order to avoid crushing plants due to the weight of tarp and its contents (ie. paint scrapings).
- Plants, including grass, need light to survive so they should not be tarped for extended periods of time. Tarps should be removed on nights, weekends, long breaks, and rainy days.

### Chemical Use

- Plants and Lawns are sensitive to chemicals so do not allow equipment, tools, and vehicles to be washed off in protected areas.
- Tarp nearby plants and lawns when chemicals are used on buildings e.g. Bleach, Mold cleaners. Runoff should be kept to a minimum.
- When rinsing buildings that have been treated with chemicals:
  - Pre-wet the plants before tarping.
  - Rinse entire ground repeatedly during process including the tarp and areas around the tarp.
  - When finished, remove tarp and rinse all plant material and lawn areas thoroughly to ensure chemicals have been removed.

### Miscellaneous

- It may be necessary to pot up garden plants and remove from construction zone before work begins.
- Contractors are responsible for cleaning up paint chips, nails and other construction debris from the landscape.
- Report any damage to the appropriate landscape staff and determine remedial actions.