

## **Spring Start-Up Steps For Your Pond**

With the arrival of warm weather, it is time to get outside and begin enjoying your pond or water feature. Your pond has been dormant all winter and needs a little bit of care to spruce it up and make it beautiful for the upcoming season. Everything is based on water temperature; cycles, plant growth, fish feeding, etc. Following these simple tips will help create a smooth transition into spring, as your pond comes back to life.

**Clean Out Debris** - One of most important aspects of spring pond maintenance is to clean out as much of the debris, leaves and build-up of muck that has accumulated on the bottom of the pond as you can. If this organic matter is left on the bottom of the pond, it will continue to decay, releasing toxins into the water. Polluted pond water can be dangerous to fish. Use a long handled net to scoop out leaves. You may rent one of our pond vacuums. Please call in advance to reserve it.

***Tip - Add Microbelift Spring/Summer Cleaner, a natural bacteria, to the pond to help accelerate the decomposition of leaves, sediment, and other organic matter that has accumulated over the fall and winter months. Begin adding Microbelift Spring/Summer Cleaner in mid to late March. Four weekly doses of the pre-measured packs are recommended***

**Water Changes** - Water changes are a necessary part of pond maintenance and should be done several times a year. In the early spring, you should make a 15% to 25% pond water change over several consecutive days to eliminate the dissolved organics built up over the winter. If you do a larger water change, it will be less stressful for the fish if you move them to a holding tank, filled with existing pond water. Depending on the number of fish, we recommend using a holding tank that it is at least 200 gallons in capacity. You may rent one of our collapsible 300 gallon holding tanks. Please call in advance to reserve it. After you fill the pond back up with the hose, treat the pond with appropriate additives. Then put fish and water from the holding tank back in the pond.

***Tip - You don't want there to be more than a five degree difference between the temperature of your pond water and the temperature of the water coming out of your hose. Drastic temperature changes in the pond water can be very stressful for your fish and even cause disease. The pond water will be cold to work in, so invest in a pair of long sleeve gloves.***

**Condition Your Tap Water-** When doing your spring start up process, don't forget to condition your tap water. It is important to eliminate the chlorine and chloramines found in municipal water. Even small traces of chlorine will irritate fish and damage gill tissue. Use PondCare Chlorine and Heavy Metal Neutralizer or Stress Coat to remove the harmful chlorine and chloramines from the tap water. Ecofix, by PondCare, can be added to the pond water as a clarifier; helping break down dead algae and increasing the oxygen levels in the water. Phos-Out removes excess phosphate which can cause cloudy pond water. Adding Pond Salt will help insure that your fish remain healthy as they become more active after the winter months.