

# Dyed Mulch.

## Another way to ruin your garden and home



**Like a plague**, those dyed red, black — and now blue! — mulches are popping-up, just about everywhere. I get the calls all week long, requesting we use one of them, instead of our premium quality, double-shredded hardwood bark mulch. I politely decline, and tell the caller why they're bad for their garden, plants and home. They're gimmicks, and bad ones at that.

Since 2000, dyed mulches have gained in popularity. Even though dyed mulch generally costs \$5 to \$10 more per cubic yard, many people feel it's worth it since these mulch products hold their color much longer. Most dyed mulches are made from ground-up pallets and other waste wood sources. They contain no beneficial bark. Dyed landscape mulch containing wood treated with CCA (chromium, copper and arsenic) — better known as pressure-treated wood — can raise the level of arsenic in soil above safe levels.

The dye from these mulches will rub-off on your hands and clothing, and care should also be exercised when dumping these products on concrete surfaces due to potential staining. Even though it's difficult to shovel mulch off a tarp, it would be a good idea to protect masonry surfaces with a tarp or heavy plastic sheeting when stockpiling dyed mulch products.

Dyed wood is mostly carbon. As a host of microorganisms in the soil goes to work digesting it, they suck almost all available nitrogen from the top 2 to 3 inches of soil. There's where the majority of new feeder roots grow. Dyed mulch will kill your perennials and bedding plants, by starving them of nitrogen.

Proponents of dyed mulches suggest adding extra nitrogen fertilizer to supply what the plants need. Experts argue it would take huge amounts to counteract the effects of the mulch.

Even worse than that, the reason that dyed mulches hold their color longer than double-shredded hardwood bark mulch, is because of the live wood cellulose fiber, which also attracts termites and earwigs into the decaying wood pieces. If you've never had a termite problem at your home, using dyed mulches is a good way to get one. Double-shredded hardwood bark, when composted 3-6 months before grinding, contains no cellulose wood fiber and doesn't attract termites and earwigs. And you're doing your garden, plants and home, a real favor.

Arguing over the aesthetics of colored mulches is difficult thing to do, because there is no accounting for individual tastes and preferences. Some people prefer the bold look created by the garish colors, while traditionalists avert their eyes when they pass a yard mulched in red. Most reputable green industry professionals discourage the use of colored mulch and even refer to the material as "McMulch." We sure do.

In addition to telling you the unvarnished truth about sub-standard mulch, we routinely feature over 20 varieties of herbs, over 700 varieties of perennials, ornamental grasses and bamboos, and more than 600 cultivars of nursery stock, ranging from the common to the very rare, unusual and hard-to-find conifers and Japanese Maples.

Our new Stone Display Yard showcases stacked stone walls, boulder walls, irregular flagstone patios and walks, brick patios and walks, boulders for landscapes, river jacks and much more. It's adjacent to the main parking lot, so be sure to visit it to see what can be done with stone.

And our Collector's Rare Plant Nursery has been supplying gardening enthusiasts for 14 years, and is a must for Connoisseurs and Serious Collectors.

In addition to the very best in plants, we have the finest hand tools, gardening supplies and accessories, composting and garden improvement aids, residential landscape design, award-winning hardy Alpine Trough Gardens and other container gardens, Alpine Perennials, water gardens, unique Water Features for your planted garden, environmentally-safe fertilizers and pest control products, landscape supplies, bird care and feeding, horticulture books, pottery, stone & brick and special accessories that make gardening easy and fun. And much more.

**OUR WARRANTY:** is unmatched by anyone, anywhere, and is one (1) year from date of purchase if you install the plant material; it is five (5) years if we install the material. Call, write or email for a complete copy of The Warranty.

As a special 'thank you' to our US Military and their families, we offer a 25% discount on all plant material, year 'round, just as we do for our communities' first responders, the police and fire personnel, and their families.

Once again, no other Garden Center, Nursery or Mass Merchandiser even comes close.™



The Gardening Specialists®

DIRECTIONS: I-83 north/south to PA exit 4; Rt#851 east 5 miles to Stewartstown; left Rt#24 north; 5 miles on right

13579 Winterstown Rd. • Felton, PA 17322-8522  
(5 miles north of Stewartstown, PA)

(717) 246-1414 • 1-800-828-3405 (PA/MD)

FAX: (717) 246-2170 • E-MAIL: js@gdnctr.com

▶ VISIT OUR WEB SITE: <http://www.gdnctr.com/>

SPRING – SUMMER – FALL HOURS

Mon.–Sat. 8 am–5 pm • Sun. Noon–5:00 pm  
(Open 12 months)

5% DISCOUNT to Senior Citizens and Garden Club Members



*"Well Worth the Ride From Anywhere"®*