

lowaponds.com - BES Services Spring Pond Check List

Clean the pond bottom

- ✓ Fallen leaves from nearby trees and bushes, as well as leaves from your pond plants, can be on the bottom of your pond. The decaying vegetation can compromise water quality so it is important to remove as much material from the bottom of your pond as possible. Net out any floating algae or old floating debris, clean your streams and pond edges as well. Use a high quality net with a flexible tip to reduce any risk of damage to your liner.

Clean skimmers, filters, and pumps

- ✓ Verify your filtration systems are ready to go. Clean and replace filter media as needed to make sure your pond filtration system is in top condition.

Install Pumps and Equipment

- ✓ Make sure everything is clean, use o-ring grease on couplings, and check your ground fault systems to verify they are working properly.

It is OK to keep your aeration systems going to give your pond a beneficial "boost" of oxygen and assist in keeping algae from blooming.

When the pond ice has thawed, increase pond oxygen levels with aeration devices. It is one of the easiest ways to improve water quality and curb conditions that encourage aggressive algae growth. Well-oxygenated water not only allows beneficial bacteria to process organic waste materials more efficiently, it also reduces carbon dioxide that feed algae. When using aerators during spring, it is important to place these devices close to the water surface. Even if the air temperature is warm, the water temperature may still be significantly cold. Aeration devices placed deep in the pond can churn the cold water, creating stressful conditions to the fish.

Early spring is the perfect time to install an ultraviolet clarifier. These units emit germicidal ultraviolet light similar to sunlight (UVC) to help clarify green water associated with free-floating algae. When the water temperature is consistently above 45°F, start up your filter along with a UV clarifier to maintain clean, clear water. If you already have a UV clarifier, spring is the perfect time to install a new UV lamp for optimum results throughout the season.

Fill the Pond to Operating Level

- ✓ Make sure your pond is at the level that you would normally operate from, insure that the pumps are submerged (if submersible style) and ready to go.

Start up your systems

- ✓ Monitor for leaks and or any flow problems. Fluctuating spring temperatures can be extremely stressful for pond fish, especially goldfish and koi that wintered over in the pond. To help reduce stress, turn off fountains or waterfalls during cold spells to slow the rate at which a pond cools.

Seed your pond with bacteria

- ✓ After a cold winter, the reduced numbers of beneficial bacteria begin to slowly increase. Give these helpful bacteria a boost and replenish their populations. I recommend Koi-Zyme.

Test the water

- ✓ Regular testing provides crucial information regarding the health of your pond. Part of opening your pond includes performing a comprehensive water test, to determine current conditions. Monitor any parameters that are awry and take steps to rectify the factors that contribute to them. Add salt to appropriate levels (.17-.20), salt will reduce the risk of parasites on your fish.

Begin feeding your fish at 50°F.

- ✓ Do not feed your fish until pond water temperature is consistently above 50°F. Feed an easier-to-digest wheat germ based food once water temperatures remain above 50°F. I recommend a good quality anti-bacterial food for one week to rid your fish of worms or parasites. At 70°F you can begin feeding your fish with a staple or growth type color enhancing food. Give your fish just enough food they can finish within a few minutes and remove any uneaten food.