



Landcare Frequently Asked Questions:

Does Landcare use Pesticides?

How does Landcare Manage Water Usage?

How Does Landcare Manage Snow Removal?

Does Landcare use Pesticides?

Landcare subscribes to an [Integrated Pest Management](#) philosophy to improve management, lower costs, and reduce risks to people and the environment. We reinforce this philosophy by requiring all of our gardeners to become licensed pesticide applicators through the [Minnesota Department of Agriculture](#). This ensures that our staff have the knowledge and skills to safely apply chemicals if we determine that chemicals are the best option.

Landcare has taken several other steps to reduce the use of chemicals on campus, including:

- Converting more than 40 acres of traditional lawn areas to prairie, wildflower meadows, or lower input turf varieties.
- Mapping service expectations for remaining turf areas, and refining service standards & tolerances to target additional areas for reduced chemical applications.
- Testing turf area soils prior to fertilizing in order to better understand what kind and how much (if any) fertilizer to apply.
- Exploring the use of organic amendments as an alternative to chemical fertilizer.

How does Landcare Manage Water Usage?

All plants need water to survive, but overwatering can harm plants and wastes a precious resource. Landcare works to [conserve water](#) while meeting the needs of campus plantings. Our 120 automatic irrigation installations are networked through a computerized, centrally controlled system. This system uses real-time climate data collected on campus to deliver evapotranspiration (ET) based watering to campus lawns and plantings. Flow sensing components allow us to create water usage reports and maximize system efficiency.

Landcare systems typically run early in the morning to minimize evaporative loss and avoid pedestrian conflicts. Occasionally, our staff will run a system in the daytime during routine maintenance or to provide newly planted areas a boost during establishment.



How Does Landcare Manage Snow Removal?

Landcare is the primary snow removal service provider for the University of Minnesota Twin Cities campus. We are responsible for clearing nearly 100 miles of streets and walkways, and 106 acres of parking surfaces. We respond with available resources to present a safe, reliable and welcoming campus following winter storm events. Snow removal priorities are based on opening high traffic pedestrian and vehicular ways first, and lower use areas as time allows. Landcare's supervisor on duty (SOD) monitors evolving weather conditions and adjusts snow removal plans to accommodate current and planned campus activities.

Landcare contractors provide snow removal services to campus parking facilities. Landcare employees open campus streets, loading docks, walkways and plazas using a fleet of specialized snow removal equipment, from large plow trucks to skid steer loaders to converted lawn mowers. Our staff shovel hundreds of steps and ramps across campus, and we partner with other Facilities Management crews to facilitate snow removal at building entrances.

To reinforce our commitment to sustainability and water quality, Landcare staff complete [Smart Salting](#) training through the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. We work hard to balance public safety with stewardship of natural and constructed resources. We encourage campus visitors to practice [safe winter habits](#).

Landcare's snow removal process and service goals are outlined below. Completion times vary by storm type, timing and severity:

1. Prep - Before a storm, when conditions warrant, apply anti-icing brine to high traffic areas, slopes, curves and intersections.
2. Open – during or immediately after a storm event, plow to open priority paths single width minimum.
3. Clear – Within 12 hours, plow to full width and stage for cleanup.
4. Clean – Within 24 hours:
 - a. Broom pavement to remove residual snow.
 - b. Widen edges for future snow storage, windrow, move designated piles.
 - c. Detail curb cuts, hydrants, signal buttons, etc.
 - d. Apply de-icing chemicals at a rate of approximately 1 pound per 300 square feet.

Typical snow depth activation triggers are:

- Standard parking lots – 2 inches
- Enhanced parking lots – 1 inch: 103 (Bell Museum), 104 (CEC), and C73 (CSC)
- All parking ramp tops – 1 inch
- Priority walkways – visible snow cover