

## Job Description - Scouting for UMass Extension's Landscape Message

### RESPONSIBILITIES

**Scout will collect the following environmental data on or within 24 hours of each reporting date, which is the Wednesday preceding each report, according to the current annual schedule.** Scouts are responsible for 24 reports each year: weekly April-June, bi-weekly July-September, and monthly in October, November, December, and March. Scouting and writing can typically be expected to take approximately a half a day per message week.

Growing degree days (base 50) accumulated for the year to date for each message.

Soil temperature at 4" depth ***in both the shade and in the sun*** (soil thermometers provided).

Rainfall (snowfall) expressed in rainfall equivalent accumulated since last report (rain gauge provided).

Plant phenology - Report the degree of bloom for a list of plants provided for each scouting period. Degrees of bloom are classified as begin, begin/full, full, full/end, or end of bloom.

Scouts will also provide the date and time for environmental data measurements. Measurements should be as close to 5:00 PM on each Wednesday reporting day as possible.

**Scout will write a detailed report of general conditions in their area.** This includes observations, news, and important weather conditions for the reporting period (ex. drought, excess rainfall, excessive or sub-normal temperatures, storm activity, etc.) in your region. This report may also include information on plant development not covered in the plant phenology listing, or anything else of interest to Green Industry practitioners worth noting. The length of this report is variable, but something in the range of 75 to 200 words is preferred.

**Scout will develop a detailed report of pests and problems.** This includes pest observations (insect, disease, weed, etc.) and problems first appearing or continuing during the reporting period in your region. This report may also include other issues of note such as environmental stresses, nuisance animal activity, or threats to those in the field such as ticks, mosquitoes, etc. The length of this report is variable, but something in the range of 75 to 200 words is preferred.

### Scout must:

- Have a schedule that permits both scouting and report submission in the first half of the week prior to the **submission deadline of Wednesday at 5:00 PM** during publishing weeks. Messages are published weekly in the spring, bi-weekly in summer, and monthly in the fall.
- Have good working knowledge of landscape plant material, especially woody plants (trees and shrubs), and have reasonable access to a range of suitable ornamental plant material to scout.
- Have good working knowledge of landscape pests, such as insects, diseases and weeds.
- Have good working knowledge of landscape cultural practices (irrigation, pruning, fertility, etc).
- Be knowledgeable about how environmental conditions (such as heat, cold, drought, etc) impact landscape plants.