



**Celebrating 21 Years!**

# ask the landscape professional

Linda K. Lillie of Sprigs & Twigs

## Welcome to my weekly series!

Feel free to send me questions you'd like to have me answer and I will do my best to address the ones of most general interest.

**EMAIL OR MAIL YOUR QUESTIONS TO:**  
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Thank you Readers for Voting Sprigs & Twigs  
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Give us a call if we can be of service!

**Question this Week:** *In the spring I noticed that my boxwoods had some brown leaves in the center. I did see new growth in the spring but the brown leaves remain. Was this caused by the harsh winter and how can I prevent this from happening again. I have about fifty of these shrubs around my home both in the front and backyard. I look forward to hearing your suggestions. - Susan*

### Linda's Answer:

Hi Susan,

Browning leaves in the center of boxwood means the inside of the plant is not getting enough sunlight to produce green leaves. Proper pruning is the solution to the browning leaves. The boxwoods need to be pruned to open up the center of the plant from the outside to allow sunlight and air to circulate within the plant.

Boxwoods that are pruned with hedge trimmers or shears end up growing in very thickly on the outside producing a shrub that is brown on the inside. This type of pruning produces an environment within the shrub that is conducive to various diseases and is a place for insects to flourish because it is dark, moist and protected.

Boxwoods should be pruned and thinned by hand (with hand pruners or a knife) with the stems cut at different heights to allow for sunlight and air flow through the shrub to deter insects and disease and to have green growth on the inside of the plant.

If you need any help with pruning, please give us a call. Thank you for your question.



**A Healthy Boxwood**

*Linda K. Lillie has been President of Sprigs & Twigs, Inc. for the last 21 years. She is a graduate of Connecticut College in Botany, an accredited NOFA Organic Land Care Professional, a Connecticut Master Gardener and a national award winning landscape designer for her design and installation projects.*

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