

*Welcome to my weekly series!*

# ask the landscape professional

Linda K. Lillie of Sprigs & Twigs



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:**

**info@sprigsandtwigs.net or Linda Lillie, Sprigs & Twigs Inc, PO Box 245, Gales Ferry, CT 06335**

**Linda's Information This Week:** *I understand that Sprigs and Twigs uses only organic solutions and I was wondering what options were available to stop weed growth through mulch. In the past, I have used applications of Preen prior to adding new mulch to the beds, is this safe?*

Sprigs & Twigs has chosen to stay away from Preen for a number of reasons. First, Preen contains corn gluten, which is marketed as a pre-emergent weed preventer. Although corn gluten has been around forever (and is certainly organic), it has never taken hold as a weed preventer. Independent research has shown corn gluten to be largely ineffective and a waste of money. Second, corn gluten is loaded with nitrogen which can "over fertilize" the soil. Once this happens, weeds and grass will grow more, which, in turn; increases thatch build-up, basically creating more trouble and maintenance. Third, Preen contains over 98% "inert" ingredients (which are likely not organic) that the manufacturer doesn't have to reveal. There have been a number of court cases where "inert" ingredients found in products have turned out to be toxic. Billions of dollars are spent marketing these products as "safe", when in reality they can be very harmful, or a waste of money! There is no way of really knowing until the contents are revealed by the manufacturer (not likely to happen). Finally, up until fifteen years ago, I used Preen in my own gardens and sadly discovered that birds eat it and it kills them as evidenced by the number of bird carcasses I had to clean up after I watched them eat Preen.

The best approach for weeds is mulching and manual weeding any that come up. Sprigs & Twigs also successfully uses "Avenger" Organic Weed Killer which kills weeds safer, better and faster than Roundup. Avenger is a broad spectrum weed killer, meaning it will kill anything it touches, so you must be careful it doesn't get on your plants. We sell Avenger in both ready-to-use and concentrate forms at our office at 8 Hurlbutt Road in Gales Ferry. Give us a call at 860-235-0752 for more information on Avenger or any of your landscape, lawn care or tree care needs.

## Sprigs & Twigs

**Avenger  
100% Organic  
Weed Killer  
Retailer**

Linda K. Lillie is the President of Sprigs & Twigs, Inc, the premier landscape tree care & lawn care company in SE Connecticut for the last 17 years. She is a 1997 graduate of Connecticut College in Botany, a Connecticut Master Gardener and a national award winning landscape designer for her design and installation work.

**860-235-0752**

