

December in Vancouver

December 1 - The only catalog I have gotten so far is the one from Edmunds Roses. Of course I need new places to plant them and last winter's carnage left me many open spots. I also decided to dig up including **Honor** and **Mellow Yellow** which were 2 original roses when I moved in. Neither one is a favorite of mine so the decision was easy. I have 2 **Double Delight** bushes and really only want one so I removed the lesser of the two. This was no easy task as it was a very mature bush with a huge bud union that had sunken below the soil level as well as many, many canes and large roots. But the easy way around this chore is to give it away to someone in the rose society with a caveat, "You want it, you dig it". It's a win-win for me. I now am down to 7 roses remaining from the original ones that came with the house.

December 15 - The long range forecast is for temperatures to drop into the mid teens before Christmas so I added more composted top soil to the winter mulch I have already put down. I am really piling the compost high on the newer roses to protect as much of the canes as possible. Snow and/or freezing rain is also in the forecast. If I am lucky, there will be a couple inches of snow to help insulate the bud unions and rose canes of the grafted roses even more.

December 19 - Looks like an ice storm is coming in a few days with very cold temperatures. I am starting to cut back my roses a bit more than usual to prevent canes from breaking under the weight of the ice and snow. In the past, the meteorologist in me was looking forward to seeing a heavy accumulation of snow and ice so much that I forgot to prepare my roses properly for the winter damage that was coming. Not this year!

December 22 - Some light freezing rain started. Looks like the storm will be a little less severe than earlier forecasts were predicting, at least in my neck of the woods.

December 23 - Light freezing rain continues, but so far a major ice storm is not occurring. But it is really cold with temperatures in the low-mid 20's the entire day. Although it never got below 20 degrees, the length of time temperatures were in the 20's will likely cause some winter damage. Seems Vancouver got spared the full brunt of the huge winter storm hitting most of the country east of the Cascades. I am kinda bummed out that there was very little snow with this storm.

December 27 - After surveying the rose garden, looks like very little damage from the freezing rain. But the rain total was very impressive at over 5 inches over the past several days. And there were high winds as well. My poor greenhouse got ripped out of the ground and ended up along the side of my storage area attached to the barn. Winds likely were over 50 mph at some point over last night.

December 28 - Rose foliage looks bad, but that is to be expected with a week of low temperatures in the 20's with freezing rain. Personally, I wish all the leaves would die and drop to the ground to later be mulched over, and so return it to Mother Nature.