



June 3, 2010

Using Nature to Nurture: Landscaping Taking Shape

Despite a few rainy days, construction of the Northwest Addition remains on schedule. Concrete pours for the upper two levels will continue into early July. The concrete on the lobby level is being shored up with additional support until it sets to 75 percent of its design strength, which will take a few weeks.

In the meantime, much of the action is happening outside. A sustainable landscape is important to Monroe Clinic, but more importantly, studies show that views of nature in a hospital setting can actually speed up the healing process for patients. And that's the ultimate goal for us. Some unique features include:

- A three-tiered design that is more formal near entrances, low-maintenance in middle zones, and naturalized along the campus edges.
- Plants and materials that are well adapted to our climate extremes, reducing the need for watering, mowing, trimming, and other maintenance.

Workers from The Bruce Company in Middleton, Wis. are landscaping the east and north entrances, and around parking lots along 22nd Street. The project should be completed by the end of June. So what's going in the ground?

- 585 perennials including a rainbow of asters, coneflowers and daylilies, and ornamental grasses such as prairie dropseed, switch grass and little bluestem
- 231 shrubs ranging from dogwoods and cranberry cotoneasters to hardy, bloom-covered rugosa roses
- 52 deciduous trees, including maples, elms and birches, that are resistant to winter weather and salt
- 20 spruces for year-round color and wind protection
- 15 Iowa junipers, a blue-green evergreen shrub that grows in a column shape
- 10 serviceberry clumps—ornamental trees with berries in spring and brilliant fall color

Nearly 1,000 trees, plants and shrubs are nothing to sneeze at (well, hopefully not), but they're just the beginning. The Bruce Company will be back in the fall to plant more trees and shrubs and will finish the major landscaping in late summer 2011.

To learn more, visit monroeclinic.org and click on the expansion button. Make sure to check out the construction webcam for a live view of what's happening.