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WE WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO WISH EVERYONE A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON!!!

Prevention and Care for Plant Frost Damage

Frost can typically occur in the valley anytime between the end of November through February. A common sign of frost damage is darkening of leaves and death of stems or shoots. Winter annuals are sensitive to frost but as with all plant material there are ways to help protect them.

Preventing Frost Damage:

1. Plant selection is a good step in preventing frost damage. Most of the native desert plants are tolerant to frost damage.
2. Plant frost sensitive plants in more sheltered areas.
3. Items like walls, boulders and homes give off heat that they have collected during the day to help give warmth at night.

Reducing Heat Loss:

1. Cover plants at night with a frost cloth or

fabric sheet. Make sure the cloth goes completely to the ground to allow the heat from the ground to exit up into the plant.

2. Make sure to remove the frost cloth every morning after the temperatures get above 36 degrees to allow the plant to warm up with the sun light.

Frost damaged plants should not be trimmed back until later February or into March when the potential threat of frost is minimal. By leaving the frost damaged material on the plant it will help protect from further die-back.



Landscape Plants Don't Need Water in the Winter, Do They?

By Jim Trog, CIC, CIA

There is often debate over the need to irrigate shrubs and trees during the winter months in the metro area where we live. Too often, the answer to the question is that supplemental irrigation is not needed. That would be fine if your landscape consisted of Bursage and Cactii, but most of us do not fall into that category.

To better explain, one must have an

understanding of the growth habits of their plant material. Just because you are not experiencing plant growth during our cooler months, doesn't mean that there is not a lot going on that you can't see. Many trees and shrubs used in our landscapes spend the winter months storing carbohydrates and developing root systems.

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These activities require soil moisture and are a vital part of the up and coming growing season when top growth is observed. Shrubs that have been starved for water all winter are often slow to respond the following spring. They may even have suffered permanent damage due to insufficient moisture in the root zone.

Conversely, those that have received the appropriate amount of water during the winter are the first to green up and put on the colorful display that we all appreciate. Think of how the surrounding desert "comes to life" in the spring following a winter when we have seen a nice rainfall.

Arbor Care

By Gary McCunn, Certified Arborist WE-7255A

Winterizing your trees may sound like strange advice living here in Phoenix. It's not quite like living in areas that get extreme types of weather. Ice storms & heavy snows, not here, but high winds and heavy rains, yes. We need to be ready for these types of weather. It might be a dry season so far but as we have seen in the past that can change in the blink of an eye. Here are just a few tips to keep in mind for your trees over the winter.

1. Winter is a great time to trim trees that go deciduous (lose their leaves in the winter). It is easier to see a trees structure when there are no leaves on the branches.
2. Get a jump on trimming the desert trees because the growth slows down in the winter and sometimes it's easier for them to recover before the extreme summer heat comes.
3. If we are having somewhat of a wet winter you

This is not to say that we should continue to irrigate our plant material at the same rate we did in July. Obviously, we should be watering far less. As a matter of fact, by January, we should only be using about 10% to 15% of the water on our plants and trees compared to what they received during the hot summer months. And don't forget, if we get a good rain, you may be able to skip a watering cycle or two.



It is much easier to see the structure of the tree after the leaves have dropped.

can cut back your watering to large well established trees to once or twice a month. Keep in mind no matter what anyone tells you, you should never stop watering your desert trees in the winter, they still need water unless we are fortunate enough to have enough rain to maintain a decent soil moisture.

Good luck with your trees this winter and as always hire a Certified Arborist to do all of your tree work.

Water Management

By Four Peaks Landscape Management, Inc.

December brings potential cold temperatures and possibility for winter rains. Based on these factors irrigation should be closely monitored and adjusted according to soil moisture and shut off if we are fortunate enough to receive rain. How much should I irrigate you ask? Well based on history we can take a close guess as to what we should be applying going into the month and make adjustments as necessary to account for actual weather. We typically use a factor call Evapotranspiration to gauge how much water to apply and depending on the type plants (this affects the crop coefficient)and irrigation (sprinklers, drip, bubblers, etc.) an estimated run time can be established to provide adequate water.

There are a couple of websites which can be utilized to gather current and historic data to estimate irrigation requirements. AZMET (Arizona Meteorological Network) which can be found at www.ag.arizona.edu/AZMET has turf watering guide for the phoenix area along with information from several weather stations throughout the state. Arizona



Overwatering turf will cause excessive leaching of nutrients from the soil which. Maintaining constant soil moisture will provide for healthy turf and plants.

Municipal Water Users Association has a table outlining seasonal watering requirements. This can be located on the web at:

www.amwua.org/publications/landscape-watering-schedules.html.

Monthly we will publish a typical run time scenario for turf and drip in the newsletter but please keep in mind that the best practice to check the plants regularly to see if there are signs of stress and the surrounding soil at the same time to ensure adequate soil moisture is present for the plant roots. If the ground is dry then increase watering until you reach a good level. The opposite would apply if the surrounding soil is muddy and extremely wet.

Monthly Landscape Checklist

Plant Renovation List (Common Type Plants)

- √ Junipers
- √ Mexican Honeysuckle

General Irrigation Setting (Actual times will vary depending on the precipitation rate of your system)

- √ Rye Grass Turf irrigated using typical pop-up sprinklers: 5 – 8 minutes twice per week.
- √ Dormant Bermuda Turf: Water once every few weeks to one time a month for a few minutes just to keep some moisture in the soil for the stolons.
- √ Drip irrigation for Plants: 8 – 12 minutes one

time per week.

- √ Drip irrigation for Trees: 10 – 20 minutes one time per week.

Please remember that these are general and that depending on your system you may need to adjust watering times up or down. Also, if we do receive rain then irrigation can be suspended until the soil dries.

