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June 2010

## Selective Pruning The Natural Look!

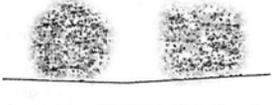
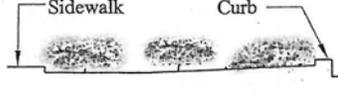
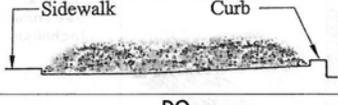
As summer begins and the plants have begun to grow it is time to turn to occasional maintenance practices which will help to control unwanted plant growth. If you followed the "Rejuvenation" process earlier in the year as necessary by plant species you should have plants which are growing out naturally and now, depending on your situation may require some "Selective Pruning". Selective Pruning is a method of only pruning the unwanted growth from the plant. This would include awkward growth, crossing branches and deadwood. The goal is to keep the natural look of the shrub and help promote flowering. Continuous shearing or hedging will remove the new growth and cause undue stress to the plant. This will also remove any flowering that may currently be in place or remove potential blooms that are forming. A large majority of our plants provide some sort of flowering which greatly enhances the beauty of the landscape.



We also refer to the fact that continuous shearing of plants will cause them to become woody in appearance and provide stress that can greatly shorten the life expectancy. Remember that the leaves of any plant provide the food necessary to keep the plant healthy and vigorous. If this factory is continuously removed while it is active then the plant will stress.

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Figure 3: Shrub Pruning	
 <p><b>DON'T</b></p>	Costly overpruning once a month can inhibit flowering, promote woody growth and require excessive watering.
 <p><b>DO</b></p>	Pruning of shrubs to maintain a full, natural shape and flowering cycle is preferred.
 <p><b>DON'T</b></p>	Square and cut off edges of groundcovers is unattractive, unnatural and potentially harmful. When each individual groundcover is pruned separately it becomes wasteful and costly. Square pruning at the edges of sidewalks and curbs forces the need for frequent trimming to maintain a clean, clipped edge.
 <p><b>DO</b></p>	Trimming at an angle along the edge allows plants to grow together and is more aesthetically pleasing. Topping trimming and angle trimming is only needed occasionally.

Care should be taken when performing pruning making sure that the tools are sharp and clean. For homeowners, using loppers and/or hand pruners are recommended depending on the size of branches to be cut. If you have plants which are growing over walkways or causing visibility issues then you may want to consider removing them and replacing with a smaller species.



## SPACE WARS

### Can Trees Win the Battle with Infrastructure?

By Gary McCunn, Certified Arborist WE-7255A



Trees are losing the battle for space along city streets. Confined to ever smaller cutouts and planting strips, it's a wonder that roots carve out their space at the expense of sidewalks, curbs, and driveways. Conflicts between tree roots and infrastructure create trip-and-fall hazards for pedestrians. Trees that have gotten too large are often removed because of these problems; trees lose and their owners lose.

Relatively little is known about the physiology of root impedance. For instance a 15 inch segment of root 1 inch in diameter exerts 175 psi, and this force can lift a sidewalk slab 10 feet long and 4 feet wide.

Root barriers are commonly used at time of planting and as a retrofit measure to obstruct root growth following root cutting. Studies indicate that they direct roots downward and buy time before roots return to more favorable conditions near the surface. Effectiveness depends on correct installation, soil conditions, and tree rooting patterns. You need to be



very careful in allowing anyone to try root cutting procedures with any of your trees.

I really think the right place to start is with planning and design. With proper planning and design we can eliminate tree root-hardscape conflicts. Unfortunately, trees are regarded as “flexible” design components and inserted in the space occupied by utilities or paving at the end of the process.

The need to manage risk associated with tree-related trip-and-fall hazards makes finding solutions to tree root-hardscape conflicts a priority. Because space for trees in cities continues to diminish, there is an urgent need for a science-based solution. Too often, developers, planners, and engineers fail to integrate trees into infrastructure design up front. Given the large amount of money spent on root-hardscape conflicts, a broad-spectrum research and education program will produce savings for municipalities that will more than pay for itself. There is hope for thriving trees if we work together to defeat the “Space Wars” problem.

Always research the mature size and growth habits of any tree that is planted. Proper placement in the landscape needs to take into consideration spacing from both obstacles above and below the ground.

## Water Management 101

By Jim Trog, CIA, CIC



June typically brings extremely hot temperatures with no chance of rains. Based on these factors irrigation should be closely monitored and adjusted according to soil moisture. 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. June historically has the highest amount of Evapotranspiration of any month therefore making it

the highest irrigation water use month of the year. 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](http://www.ag.arizona.edu/AZMET) has turf watering guide for the phoenix area along with information from several weather stations throughout the state. Arizona Municipal Water Users Association has a table outlining seasonal watering requirements and an interactive scheduling tool which is extremely helpful. This can be located on the web at:

[www.amwua.org](http://www.amwua.org)

The best water management practice of all is to know your landscape and pay attention to appearance, growth and even signs of stress in the plants. Taking some time to make sure that you are not overwatering will not only help conserve water but will save money.



## MONTHLY LANDSCAPE CHECKLIST

### Plant Renovation List (Common Type Plants)

- √ Desert Bird of Paradise
- √ Bottlebrush
- √ Bat-Faced Cuphea
- √ Brittlebush
- √ Creosote
- √ Oleander
- √ Penstemon

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

- √ Bermuda Grass Turf irrigated using typical pop-up sprinklers: 12 – 15 minutes three times per week.
- √ Drip irrigation for Plants: 20 – 30 minutes two times per week. These times are for ornamental type plants. Native or xeriscape plants will require less.

- √ Drip irrigation for Trees: 40 – 50 minutes one time per week. These times are for ornamental type trees. Native or xeriscape trees will require less.

Please remember that these are general recommendations and 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.

Turf Fertilization for the Bermuda Grass should be completed once every six to eight weeks on average using fertilizer containing at least 16–20% Nitrogen. Apply following the label and make sure to water in for a few minutes after application.