

P.O. Box 7220, Tempe, Arizona 85281
Web site address: www.fourpeakslandscape.com
E-mail address: info@fourpeakslandscape.com
Phone number: (480) 967-0376

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Rye Grass Out, Bermuda Grass In!

You may be admiring that beautiful stand of Rye grass which looks great but it's time to make it go away. If you continue to try and baby the Rye grass along (which can hold on until July with enough water) it will just lead to a poor Bermuda grass stand and when it finally does brown out in mid summer there will not be any Bermuda grass to take its place. Bermuda grass needs about 100 days of active growing to maintain a healthy stand. This means that the Bermuda needs to be growing in full force by early June, especially if you plan on planting Rye grass again in the Fall. To properly transition to Bermuda there are a few steps that should be followed. In late April to early May, when soil temperatures reach 65 degrees or higher, dormant Bermuda begins to emerge. Because of the competition between the 2 grasses (Bermuda & rye), care should be taken to enhance the Bermuda while antagonizing the Rye. Keep in mind, the time to change from rye to Bermuda is April through May. This can be done by completing the following:

1. Lower the Mowing Height

Remove leaf area from the rye, this causes the Rye to use up food reserves in the roots. This activity is termed "Burning Out". The lower mowing height also opens up the turf canopy for direct heat absorption by the soil, which encourages Bermuda grass growth.

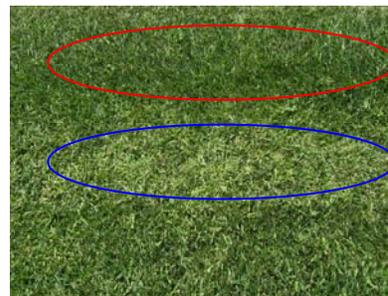
2. Fertilize

Light fertilizer applications every 2 weeks using

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water soluble nitrogen fertilizer is recommended. This might increase growth of the Rye, so an additional mowing in the middle of the week may be necessary. This fertilizer application will help weaken the Rye grass in conjunction with the lower mowing height in addition to reviving the dormant Bermuda grass.



Remaining Rye Grass

Bermuda Grass Filling In

3. Water to the Needs of the Bermuda Grass

It is recommended that you reduce or maintain the amount of irrigation to stress the rye grass. As the temperatures begin to increase in May the Rye grass will require additional water. Only apply enough water for the Bermuda which will help the Bermuda grass out-compete the Rye. Look for a grayish blue coloration of the rye for visible signs of Rye stress. Remember, you want to decrease the irrigation just enough to stress the rye but still allow the Bermuda to grow. **Do not shut off the irrigation altogether** as this will cause damage to both grasses.

Following these steps for 4 to 5 weeks should provide the needed results to have a healthy Bermuda turf stand for the summer.

SUMMERTIME IRRIGATION TIPS

By Jim Trog, CIA, CIC



The month of May has once again rolled around meaning that shortly, we will begin that long stretch of 100+ degree days. Here are a few tips to get the most out of the irrigation water for your landscape:

- Adjust the start time on your irrigation controller so that irrigation cycle is complete before dawn. On average, the predawn

hours experience the least wind, the highest humidity and the lowest temperatures. These things combined result in the lowest evaporation which allows more water to reach its target.

- Try multiple start times to lessen runoff. By cutting the cycle time in half and adding a second start time or even dividing the run time in thirds and adding a third start time gives the soil a better opportunity to absorb the irrigation it is receiving. This does apply solely

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Why Should My Community Hire a Certified Arborist?

By Gary McCunn, Certified Arborist WE-7255A



I know a lot of you know what a Certified Arborist is, but do you know all that he can do for you? In this article I will try and clarify one reason, of many.

There are thousands of new trees being planted every week here in Phoenix and at some point they will all need to be trimmed. The passive action of not trimming usually means the loss of trees. As a Manager you know how costly this can be not to mention the huge liability you carry when one of these larger trees comes down.

To send out a bid request to several companies with only a site map and directions to use the ANSI A300 pruning standards won't produce your desired results. Without a written specifications plan, each Arborist will bid on the work he or she thinks should be done. With a limited scope outline this decision could vary widely among professionals. The ANSI A300 pruning standards are too general for competitive bidding. Bring in an Arborist before you start your bidding process and have him put together what we call Written Specifications to than

hand out to the bidders. I think you will find that the bids will make a lot more sense and you will have a better idea of what is going to be done to your trees.

Written Specifications should include:

- Objectives of the Pruning
- Pruning Types to be Made
- Size of Branches to be Removed
- Percentage of Crown to be Removed
- Location of Branches to be Trimmed or Removed

Here at Four Peaks Landscape Management we have added GIS Tree Mapping as one of our services. Now we are able to turn in a complete mapping of where all your trees are located, size of tree, species, and canopy size.

Gary McCunn

Four Peaks Landscape Management, Inc.

Arbor Manager/Certified Arborist WE-7255A

602-326-3903

Email: gmccunn@fourpeakslandscape.com

SUMMERTIME IRRIGATION TIPS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

to landscapes with slopes. Many areas that have hard clay or compacted soil will see runoff away from the plant material even when the area is completely flat. This applies to both turf and drip irrigation.

- Water to the depth of the root zone. Be sure that each cycle is allowing the whole root zone to receive water. This keeps the root zone cool reducing stress from summer temperatures and it allows nutrients to remain soluble and available for uptake by the root system. Check by probing the soil with a long screwdriver or metal rod. In turf, for example, you should be able to put the screwdriver in the soil to a depth of 8" to 12". If it easily penetrates that far, consider reducing the run time. Watering deeper than the roots can reach doesn't benefit the plant material.
- Check the irrigation system monthly and make repairs as needed. Sprinklers that have been chewed off by the dog or emitters that have



If you have slopes pay attention to runoff from the sprinklers. Set sprinkler run times to the point where runoff begins. If additional water is required then add start times and adjust accordingly.

popped off the distribution tube are wasting water in the landscape.

For more water saving tips, visit www.wateruseitwisely.com or your city's water conservation department website.



MONTHLY LANDSCAPE CHECKLIST

– Plant Renovation List (Common Type Plants)

- ✓ Pink or Red Fairy Dusters
- ✓ Natal Plum
- ✓ Cassia (if they were not completed in April)
- ✓ Penstemon
- ✓ Brittlebush

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

- ✓ Rye or Bermuda Grass Turf irrigated using typical pop-up sprinklers: 6 – 9 minutes twice per week. Remember that you should begin transitioning

the Rye grass to Bermuda, do not increase the amount of water if you see the Rye begin to stress and die off. Pay attention to the Bermuda.

- ✓ Drip irrigation for Plants: 15 – 20 minutes two times per week.
- ✓ Drip irrigation for Trees: 20 – 25 minutes two times per week.

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.