

Landscape Safety

With the arrival of summer and the intense summer temperatures, it is important to use caution while working outdoors in your yard. Work in the early morning hours or late in the afternoon and always drink plenty of water.

May "To Do's"

Tree Management

Now is a good time to structurally prune and thin out tree canopies to reduce the possibility of damage during our monsoon storms. Look for damaged, dead, diseased and crossing branches. Pruning mesquite and palo verde trees now will also help to reduce seed pod cleanup later on in the summer.

Shrub Management

During this time of the year, rejuvenate cassias, brittle bush and fairy dusters by cutting them back to 18-24 inch in height. This will allow the plant to be produce new growth and be healthier and produce more flowers during the summer. This will also remove the seed pods from the spring blooming.

Any remaining plant replacements should be completed this month. Plants should be well established prior to the arrival of the hot summer temperatures. Be sure to irrigation any new plantings to prevent stress.

Summer Annuals

Be sure that if you haven't already planted summer annuals, get them in very soon. Hot summer temperatures can easily cause stress to annuals. Be sure to water the flowers daily and apply a balanced fertilizer monthly to encourage health and growth. As temperatures rise, be sure to avoid overwatering which can encourage diseases.

Turf

You should be transitioning overseeded turf to remove the rye and encourage bermuda growth. It is important that the rye is eliminated as soon as possible to allow the bermuda to have adequate time for re-growth before overseeding time arrives again in October.

Mowing height should be in the 1 ½ inch range to help suppress the rye and warm up the soil for the bermuda growth

Apply a light application of a nitrogen based fertilizer will help the bermuda grow through the rye.

Aeration and de-thatching will also help to remove the rye and encourage bermuda growth.

Monthly Manager's Feature

By: Bill Jernigan, East Valley Area Manager

Proper Tree Irrigation

Correct tree care is one of the most misunderstood landscape practices by homeowners today. Many of the problems we see with trees are directly related to improper irrigation practices and lack of drip system modifications that should be done as the trees mature.

As trees grow, the emitters need to be move outward to match the rate of growth of the tree. Keep in mind that the normal growth of the tree is for the roots to grow outward at the same rate as the branches of the tree. As an example, a tree with a canopy of 15 feet wide will normally have roots growing out 15 feet wide or more. However, as is often seen in landscapes, the roots do not keep up with the growth of the canopy because there is a constant supply of water from emitters still placed at the base of the trunk. This results in tree blown over during Monsoon storms.

To help prevent this type of damage, each year in the spring through early summer, move the emitters out to the edge of the canopy of the tree. Limit emitter movement to no more than 2-3 feet from the last placement so that the roots will follow the movement of the water. This will help to encourage the tree to grow new roots away from the trunk to help better support the tree.

Two great resources on tree care include the *International Society of Arboriculture*. This is the professional organization for Arborist and has a lot of good information on tree care and maintenance. Visit www.isa-arbor.com

The other is an easy to read resource on tree care and other landscape topics. *The Arizona Master Gardener Manual* is published by the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension. Visit www.ag.arizona.edu/extension

What to Watch For Next Month

Plan on trimming your palm trees around the first of June. Remove all flower stalks and prune the frawns to a 45° to 90° angle. Resist pruning too many frawns as this can be detrimental to the tree.

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