

SPRING IS AROUND THE CORNER

This is the best time to be in Arizona while making fun of friends and family who are shoveling snow in Northern and Eastern parts of the country. They just have not figured it out yet! Spring training is about to begin, and we will gradually work our way into triple digit temperatures but have a couple of months to enjoy the perfect weather.

SDL will impart horticultural tips each month to help the community understand what we do, when we do it and why we do it. Hopefully, each resident will be able to take some of the tips and utilize them on their own home.

Currently, SDL is trimming the Bird of Paradise to about one foot. The Bird of Paradise are the plant with beautiful orange blooms most of the year and can be found on all the major thoroughfares throughout the community. Typically, you can start to trim this plant around Thanksgiving and by end of the summer, they will reach five feet or so. By trimming the Bird of Paradise, you are rejuvenating the plant and creating new and healthy growth for the warmer weather to come. Remember, when you cut plants back aggressively, the root system stays untouched and can provide more energy to producing new and vigorous growth.

Citrus trees are another benefit of living in the desert Southwest. Fertilizing at the proper time will help produce more fruit and overall better health for your trees. A good rule of thumb is to fertilize around these four Holidays: Valentine's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day. It is an easy way to remember to fertilize your fruit trees. SDL has added an attachment for future reference on Citrus tree care from our friends at the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension.

Irrigation management will need to be at the forefront of all we do in the landscapes in Arizona. Water costs will never decrease, and the real possibility of water restrictions may be closer than we realize. I always refer to the book "Cadillac Desert, The American West and Its Disappearing Water", written by Marc Reisner in 1986. It is an in depth look at how the West was populated and what our forefathers had to do to make water available to many of the arid regions in the West, including most all of Arizona.

As temperatures rise in the spring, it is important to increase the time and duration you water your turf, trees, shrubs, and flowers. It seems like a reasonable and common-sense approach and it is. Do not over complicate how you manage your irrigation systems at your home.

TURF - pop up heads – 3 to 4 days per week at 5 minutes.

- Rotor heads – 3 to 4 times per week at 15 minutes.

TREES – drip emitters – 1 time per week at 2 hours (deep watering is best for trees to flush salts and encourage deep root systems).

SHRUBS – drip emitters – 2 to 3 times per week at 1 hour.

FLOWERS – drip emitters – every other day for 15 minutes but check moisture levels daily.

The threat of frost is generally gone by mid-February. Any plant that has some frost damage may be pruned back to live wood and will flush new growth as the temperatures continue to rise. Lantana, Hibiscus, Bougainvillea and other frost sensitive plants will bounce back quickly after the removal of the

affected parts of the plant. Resist the urge to trim earlier as the frosted branches will protect the undergrowth of the plant for further damage.

Service Direct Landscape is excited to be at Westbrook Village as your landscape provider. We want to provide you with the best information for managing your landscapes. If there is a topic you would like to see covered in a future article, please contact the Westbrook Village offices so it can be passed along to us.

GREEN SIDE UP FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT SDL