



THE SUMMER GRIND IS HERE FOR PEOPLE AND PLANTS

We're in the middle of another summer in Arizona and monsoons have not developed as we had hoped. People and plants equally suffer in the heat and humidity, at least we should expect some rainfall! Keep your fingers crossed as the pundits are still predicting an active monsoon season for us. Monsoon means strong winds and hopefully some rainfall will come with it to help ease our drought conditions we've been experiencing over the past twenty years.

Too often, the rains we get with monsoon season is brief and comes down quickly. Most of the moisture we get from summer rains washes away quickly into runoff basins or into city sewer systems. Be sure to check runoff areas and clear debris so water can flow unimpeded and not back up into property causing significant water damages.

It is a good time to check your tree canopies and get them trimmed if they overhang rooflines or walls. There is far more damage caused by fallen trees and limbs than from water issues during our summer months. Check your trees often as they are the largest asset in the landscape. After a storm, check the canopy for broken limbs that may be still hanging in the tree but loosely secured. Remove loose or cracked limbs quickly to avoid a liability issue at your home.

During monsoon season, you'll notice clouds developing in the early afternoon. By late afternoon, you'll start to see the clouds darken with the hope some rain will accompany the menacing sky. Generally, high winds will be the first issue you'll experience. Get pets inside and batten down the hatches. Move anything that may go airborne to a safe place during the storm. Pool umbrellas, lounge chairs and even trampolines have been known to end up in neighboring properties.

If you have rain gutters and spouting on your home, consider harvesting water from the monsoon storms. Modify the spouting to allow a 30-gallon drum to be set below the output port. Check with Westbrook Village and inquire if this may fit into the CC&R's for backyards only. The high nitrogen content in rainfall is far better than potable water and would do well on plants, trees and flowers while saving your irrigation system from running. Remember, for every .25" of rain, you should be able to shut your system down for a couple of days and save water.

During a drought and inflationary times, treat water as the most prized commodity we have. Water availability in the desert is the classic supply and demand scenario. Water costs will never decrease during times of drought as the demand for fresh water is at an all time high and availability is low.

Be smart with our use of water and we'll make it through another long, hot summer.