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GREEN Pages

**The Best Desert Gardening
News You Can Use**

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WINTER 2009

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Lilacs & Roses And the southwest desert

Colorful and unique seems to be the all the buzz for many of the requests regarding a new plant for the garden. So, what can we plant during the winter in the desert southwest that will thrive and give us the color or variety that we crave?

Lilacs and Roses are great options for growing in desert soils. Both of these glorious flowering shrubs are very cold hardy and produce an abundance of color.

How about a fragrant flowering shrub that actually likes a bit higher pH? A Lilac (genus *Syringa*) does well with a soil pH of 7.5, and this is one reason they make a good candidate for our area. Our high pH is the downfall of so many of the plants we desire, but not this one. Lilacs in the desert are not yet so popular that you frequently see them. When you choose a lilac and plant it into your garden, you have selected a shrub that's part of our history. Thomas Jefferson wrote about them and planted them.

Here in the hot and arid southwest desert Lilacs do prefer partial sun to look their best. Areas that get some afternoon shade from a wall or tree will do nicely. Avoid planting them in the middle of the landscape surrounded by rocks. Most Lilacs bloom best with a good winter chilling period. So, the colder our winters get the better show you'll get from your Lilac the following spring; April and May. They'll grow to seven to ten feet in height and six feet wide. A nice specimen plant! The flowers are mostly white, lilac, or purple, pleasantly fragrant in long clusters at the end of the stems. Plus, hummingbirds and butterflies just go nuts for Lilac flowers.

Roses are another color show-off that thrive in the sunny southwest. These also do much better in afternoon shade during the summer months, but will tolerate a lot of heat without dying. You can start off by planting a living rose plant or a dormant rose. There are advantages to either of these options, but the dormant plants will only be available from late December through February. Check our Star Note on Planting Dormant Roses (#520B) for detail instructions.

Roses offer a huge variety of colors, fragrances and sizes. Not only the size and shape of the flower, but the shrub size difference between a Grandiflora and a Floribunda. Not to mention the miniatures! The flower show you'll get in the spring and fall will dazzle yourself, friends and neighbors.

So, how to successfully grow them is the only question left.

Care

You will want to amend the soil with lots of organic material like Pay Dirt™ and dig the hole extra wide in order to encourage a healthy root system.

For Lilacs, though initial irrigation needs to be close to the trunk or base of the plant, you'll want to add more emitters or a dripperline circling but several feet away from the trunk as the shrub matures. It's best to plant them when they are dormant (like during the winter!), so expect

Continued Next Page

ATTENTION PROFESSIONAL LANDSCAPERS Grow your business

As a professional in the Southern Nevada Green Industry you and your company have much at stake in making sure the communities of homeowners are aware of the specialties that your company has to offer, and that they know and remember your name during the next several months when it comes time to make new landscaping decisions.

This is a primary reason we have opened up advertising in these Green Pages to our professional customers. We print and distribute over 17,000 Green Pages quarterly. These are not just any homeowner, but those that have a sincere interest in gardening and landscaping. Advertisers in the Green Pages are reaching the most targeted market possible here in Southern Nevada and Southern Utah. Ad sizes from business card to full page are available. A size just right for your budget. This is not an expense – it is as much an investment in the success of your business as any tool you could buy.

It is in times where things are challenging that a few entrepreneurs step up and stand out among the rest. Is it the time for you and your company to look into increasing your presence in the market?

Star Nursery - your Partner in Landscape Success
For more information about advertising contact:
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Lilacs & Roses continued



to find them looking like sticks. Watering should be deep and not just for 5 minutes. A slow soaking gets deep into the soil and helps establish a strong root system.

Soon after blooming has finished, prune the spent flowers (deadhead) back to the point just above where the new buds are forming. A standard with pruning; damaged stems and dead wood should be cut off. Be moderate in your pruning as heavy pruning will result in the loss of much of next years bloom. Next years flowers are formed on the plant this year.

Remember: Pruning should only be done AFTER blooming is finished! If your Syringa has matured and gotten rather rugged looking, You can renovate your lilac in late winter to obtain a healthy framework.

For Roses, watch for pests! Early detection and prevention will minimize any problems and stress that would otherwise occur. Aphids multiply rapidly, but are easily controlled with a number of products. Clean and disinfect your pruners with diluted bleach to prevent spreading any virus, and keep the area around the base of your roses clean and free from decaying and possible infected foliage. Use fresh processed mulch to be safe.

Avoid watering too often if you have slow draining 'clay type' soil as neither of these plants like to have wet feet. Constantly wet soil will not have enough oxygen to help the roots breathe. Lilacs and Roses do like fertile soil so make sure you give them some Dr. Q's Rose Food or Tree Vine and Shrub Food regularly.

Attend one of our winter pruning seminars in January for more tips on pruning Rose, Lilacs, Fruit Trees and more (see the Calendar of Events section for details).



Employee Spotlight

Have you ever shopped at a store and been lucky enough to run into someone who is literally an expert in the department where you are trying to find just the right thing for your home? If you have gone shopping for some new plants, and done so at Star Nursery's Cheyenne store, you may have had Sandra Stowe there to help you and been just that lucky.

Sandra, a happy housewife when in 1992 she attended a gardening seminar, couldn't get plants off her mind after that. So, she then began her career in horticulture back in the spring of 1993 in Sonoma county California. She became a Master Gardener there and credits her love for and understanding of plants to Bob Cowles and Bill Scholl of Empire Nursery in Santa Rosa Ca. Bob has since passed away, but his and Bill's input into her life is present daily. Bob started out selling fuchsias, and soon they both had Sandra inspired enough to learn the care and characteristics of thousands of plants as well as the soil they need to grow in.

Her Daughter Shannon is a paralegal and gave Sandra her joyous granddaughters Shamar and Shariah. Her Son Jeremy loves the company he works for, and what he does for Station Casinos. As her children began to grow up, she saw that she had more time to invest in her new career. Sandra and her husband Don, who works for Floor and Decor are the perfect home improvement couple. Both of their careers have them helping folks to make their home and landscape more beautiful.

Sandra was born in San Francisco and grew up enjoying the lush landscapes afforded by the rain of that section of the country, yet as she has now adapted to the arid desert southwest her favorite plants are desert natives like Creosote, Soap tree Yucca and Agaves. After re-locating to Las Vegas it didn't take Sandra long to discover the Master Gardener program here, and then become an active member. She is continuing her education at the College of Southern Nevada and has adopted Dr. Richard Reitz and the Cooperative Extension's Karen Dyka as her new mentors of horticultural excellence. She'll have her Associates degree soon.

Sandra's favorite hobby growing up and now; is swimming, though she admits to spending too little time in the pool of late. As a member of USMS Swimming, she was impressed with how well the mature swimmers of 60, 70 and 80 years kept in such good shape. Another of her hobbies is poetry:

Minding the Garden; Ideas are born, knowledge passes on. Arms stretch towards the Sun, shooting sprigs of life in all directions. Renewal is the key, without it... a withering! Like minds – open yours. Nurture understanding; Spade under the past. Decomposing failures to enrich the future; Lessons Learned!

When it comes to customers, just watch Sandra in action and you can see how enamored by them she is. Whether they are planting newbies or seasoned experts she has kind and useful information to share with all of them. Star Nursery has been fortunate enough to have her on our team since 2005, and you can put her on yours the next time you visit our store at 7330 W. Cheyenne (near Tenaya). If you're looking for top notch customer service and plant skills, stop by and say hi!



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EA.



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- Controls insect eggs including: codling moth, gypsy moth, oak moth, spider mite & tent caterpillar
- Controls sooty mold
- For use on conifers, roses, shrubs & trees including: apples, apricots, cherries, peaches, pears, plums and citrus (grapefruits, lemons, limes, oranges & tangerines)
- For use during dormant & growing seasons
- Active ingredient: Petroleum Oil

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*Offer expires 02/28/2010.

Nevada Star Nursery Locations:

2600 W. Ann Rd. Ann Rd. & Coleman (702)216-7827 (STAR)	8725 S. Eastern Ave. S. Eastern north of I-215 (702) 333-7827 (STAR)
5340 S. Boulder Hwy. E. Tropicana & Boulder Hwy. (702) 456-8818	8170 W. Charleston Blvd. Charleston & Cimmaron (702) 360-7827 (STAR)
7330 W. Cheyenne Ave. W. Cheyenne & Tenaya (702) 645-2400	9480 W. Tropicana Ave. & South Fort Apache (702) 728-7827 (STAR)
5380 Blue Diamond Rd. Blue Diamond W. of Decatur (702) 444-7827 (STAR)	Pahrump 911 Buol Rd. (Highway 372 & Buol Rd.) (775) 727-5300

Southern Utah Star Nursery Locations:

1145 W. Sunset Blvd. St. George, UT (1/4 mile west of Bluff St.) (435) 688-7827 (STAR)	385 W. Telegraph Rd. Washington City, UT (1/2 mile from Green Springs Dr. & the 15) (435) 986-0820
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Christmas Tree Farms *Very environmentally friendly*



We are all concerned about our environment. Landfills are being overloaded and our global climate is under stress. We are looking for ways to reduce our carbon footprint while improving our communities. Christmas tree farms are a great way to accomplish this.

Fir trees that are cut down for Christmas nowadays are grown on tree farms. These tree farms are in business with the sole function of planting, cultivating and then harvesting evergreen trees for Christmas.

The process is very similar to any other farm. There is a continual rotation of plants; from seedlings to ready-for-the-season trees. Sometimes this takes seven or more years, and during this time these trees are doing their part to reduce carbon dioxide and produce oxygen. It is solely due to Christmas Tree sales that these tree farms, and the trees they grow even exist.

Real trees can then be chipped, converted into mulch and become useful to conserving water, reducing weeds and in general helping to create more beautiful landscapes. This contrasts substantially with plastic trees that one day will be disposed of and likely put into our already overfull landfills.

Real cut-live trees also offer a wonderful fragrance and sense of tradition to the season, adding to the warmth provided by the uniting of family. Nothing makes the holiday season as wonderful as the scent of freshly baked turkey or vegetable platters blended in with the freshness of pine.

After you find a tree that appeals to you, make sure it's fresh. A few inner brown needles are normal so you need not be concerned with this. To begin checking your tree's freshness, run your fingers through the branches; shake the tree to remove these dead inner needles. Now, the needles remaining should be flexible and not fall easily. The branches should all be very flexible.



- When you purchase your tree, make sure to get that "fresh cut" on the base of the trunk to allow for water uptake.
- Once home, place the tree in water immediately. Most species can go hours after cutting the trunk and still take up water, but every minute counts.
- Don't bruise the cut surface or get it dirty.
- Always keep an adequate supply of water in the tree stand.
- Dr Q's Plant Tonic or other tree preservatives can help keep the pores of the trunk open, but won't do any good if you don't keep water in the tree stand AT ALL TIMES.
- For prolonged life, keep your tree out of hot locations such as south or west-facing windows or near fireplaces.

Don't just toss your tree into the garbage after it is no longer magical with ornaments and lights – Recycle it!

For more recycling information visit www.StarNursery.com.



The Green Standard

Flexrake® stands alone as the #1 choice of professional gardeners.

Flexrake rakes have been made to last in the U.S.A. since 1945. A revolutionary idea back then, the specialized lawn rake has become an indispensable tool for gardeners everywhere. Flexrake's unique design ensures that each tine individually flexes and lifts embedded debris from deep below the surface of the turf, making each stroke more efficient and requiring fewer strokes to complete each raking job. Working gardeners use tools they can depend on, they use Flexrake.

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Dr. Q's Winter Gardening Calendar

December

- Fertilize winter lawns to maintain good color.
- Want winter color? Plant Pansies, Snapdragons and Stock. These are cold hardy and will bloom through April.
- Over watering your lawn or watering in the evening will contribute to fungus. If you detect fungus use a good fungicide before you lose your lawn.
- When watering, avoid ice, water between 9 am and 10 am.
- Protect your Queen Palms from the cold, use a Palm Parka
- When selecting a Christmas tree, make sure it's fresh, with a fresh bottom cut.
- Protect your Pygmy Palms and other frost tender shrubs. Cover them with N'Sulate or use one of the new "Plant Protector Bags".

January

- Recycle your holiday tree. Check www.StarNursery.com for a complete listing of drop-off locations.
- Protect tender succulents and cacti from cold by covering them with N-Sulate.
- Prune your roses – don't forget the "Rose Potion" and attend our seminars (see Community Events section)
- Gray aphid population explodes in the winter, try a long lasting insecticide like Bayer Rose & Flower Insect Killer, so you don't need to spray so often.
- Protect deciduous fruit trees. Use Liqui-Cop and Volck oil where appropriate.
- Some leaf drop is normal for citrus particularly in the late winter / early spring as new leaves are pushing out. Heavy leaf drop could be due to a variety of circumstances: from over watering to improper fertilization.

February

- Pep up your house plants by repotting them into slightly larger containers. Use a high quality potting soil like Filthy Rich™.
- This is the month to prepare your vegetable and flower beds for spring gardens. For each 100 square feet of soil, sprinkle four pounds of 16-20-0, ammonium phosphate.
- Treat soils with Green Light's Iron & Soil Acidifier. Mix well and then water. Top this off with three inches of organic mulch.
- Seeds to sow: African Daisies, Alyssum, Basil, Carnation, Delphinium, Gaillardia, Gloriosa Daisy, Hollyhocks, Larkspur, Lupines, Nasturnium, Pansy, Petunia, Phlox, Poppy, Scabiosa, Shasta Daisy, Snapdragon, Sweet William, Verbena, Viola.
- Powdery mildew may appear on new rose growth, grapes, cucumbers, citrus and euonymus. Prevent it by keeping over-spray off your shrubs, treat infected plants with fungicide.
- Warmer weather of an early false spring can be expected, but this doesn't mean we're out of the woods for possible freezes. Keep an eye on weather forecasts. Cover those frost-tender plants when the warnings come.
- February is fertilizing time for deciduous fruit, nut and shade trees. Use Dr. Q's Fruit and Nut fertilizer or a balanced fertilizer. Apply according to rates on the bag.
- Pecan trees and grape vines need extra zinc to help them produce their best. Use Dr. Q's Plant Tonic

Fruit Trees Winter is the time to care for them

Too often folks bring in damaged fruit in the spring or early summer and ask me what has happened. The typical answer is that either insects or disease has attacked the fruit and they have now lost most of the tree's crop. It's too late to deal with the pest that has caused the damage.

In the winter, when the trees are dormant these pests are lurking on the tree bark or around the base of the tree in the leaves and debris from fall. This is when they need to be controlled.

The disease that so often attacks our fruit trees is a fungus that overwinters on infected peach (and other stone fruits) buds and twigs. Infection can actually occur in the dormant season with at least 24 hours of moisture and temperatures above 36°F.

When temperatures are higher during the growing season, shorter periods of moisture are required for active infection. Fungus initiates with spores which are primarily spread by splashing water. Most cultivars or varieties of peach, nectarine, apricot, and almond are generally very susceptible. Cherry and plum are less so and show only leaf and fruit symptoms when extended periods of moisture are present in late spring and early summer.



Then there are the many insects that just love to feast on our home-grown crops when they start to ripen. Good quality fruit can not be reliably grown without an effective control program. Insects like aphids and scale are common and often like fungi can overwinter on fruit trees.

What to do?

Disease Prevention: During the dormant winter season apply a product like Liqui-Cop throughout the tree. This effectively kills the latent spores that are waiting for some moist and warmer weather to get started.

Insect Control: Apply a horticultural oil like Volck and seal the fate of these damaging pests before next years crop even sets.



If you intend to grow your own fruit, you must be willing to learn the important insect and disease pests and the methods to control them. Then you'll need to be willing to spend the time and effort to do the job right. Otherwise these darned pests will beat you to your fruit. For the backyard gardener, the effort is not really that much. Spraying your trees with a Dial-A-Spray is quick and easy.

GO GREEN



SOUTH POINT

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Winter Winds Stake trees

It is that time of year again, and even though we typically have mild winter temperatures (compared to much of the country) we can count on having wind storms. Clear windy days with gusts that often get over 40 miles per hour. Whether we need to stake our tree, and how to properly do that is an important issue.

It can be very useful to see how not to do it.



Here we have a California Pepper tree. These are prone to having floppy trunks, especially when they aren't staked properly. In this case, notice the white stake. This was originally the "transport stake"; meaning it was only intended to support the tree during transport. After planting it should have been removed. Any stake that is tied closely to the tree like this, and left there following planting will actually reduce the strength of the trunk and encourage it to be weak and floppy.

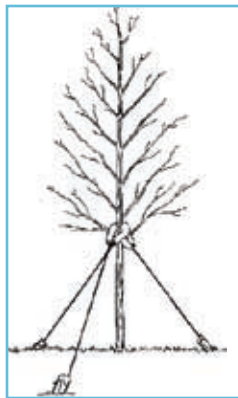
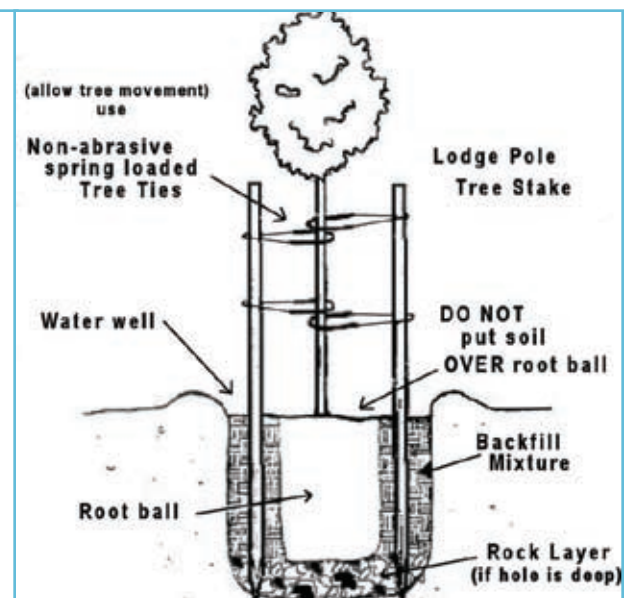
To the right is a graphic of how to properly stake a tree. Notice that the stakes are away from the tree far enough to allow sufficient wiggling and movement during windy periods. The hole is wide enough to help the roots get started and provide plenty of room for the stakes. If you happen to dig the hole a bit too deep, use rocks or a material that won't compress with time, otherwise the tree winds up "sinking" and dirt eventually cover the roots and suffocates them.

Use non-abrasive ties to secure the tree to the stakes and make sure they are NOT too tight. Remember; the tree needs to wiggle to develop trunk strength.

So, how do you know if your tree needs staking?

First; most single or "standard" trunked trees, where the trunk is taller than five feet and has a caliper (or thickness) of less than 2 inches and a crown (or head) more than 4 feet across will likely need some support. New trees with a single trunk will usually need staking until the root system has established. This usually takes 1 to 2 years, depending on the soil, and how well the hole was dug. Bottom line; watch what happens on a breezy day. If your eyes or imagination lets you envision the tree leaning more than 10 degrees, it would probably be a good idea to protect your investment with some stakes. Wind gusts come suddenly and without some reinforcement your tree can suffer serious injury to the trunk or root system.

Our dirt is generally very hard and not so easy to drive stakes into. Star Nursery rents "stake drivers" that slide over the lodge pole and allow you to use the driver to hammer the stake into the soil. The rental is very inexpensive.



If the soil is not firm enough and the stakes need some extra support or stakes would not be strong enough to hold the tree, use a guy-wire support system. The wires are placed around the tree in a triangular fashion, anchored to the soil and attached to the tree with rubber-type hoses to protect the trunk from abrasion. Kits are available that provide all the materials and instructions.



Make sure to loosen the guy wires enough to allow wiggle room.

We get winds! Don't just let the wind get your valuable young tree, protect it – stake it!

Easy Gardener Great Results. Less Work!



Plant Protector Bags

- Protects plants from damaging weather
- Covers plants quickly and easily
- Reusable and recyclable



Try one of these other great products by Easy Gardener.



Plant & Seed Blanket

- Faster germination
- Improves plant growth, prevents insect damage
- Lets air and water through
- Perfect for early spring and fall



Original CloudCover®

- Protects plants from weather extremes
- Decreases watering frequency
- Reduces transplant shock
- Cleans and shines leaves

Available at your local Star Nursery

*Offer expires 02/28/2010.

Protect your Landscape from freezing temperatures

With a bit of preparation you can protect your plants and landscape against winter loss and damage while keeping your yard looking its best. Prevention is much less expensive than the cure!

Our recent mild winters mean that most of the landscape plants here are really not adapted to a cold winter. These can be hurt in an especially hard winter or even just a one week cold snap. By making sure your plants are healthy and watered properly you can give them their best chance to survive and minimize damage.

Cooler winter temps mean that you need to reduce the watering frequency on your system. Frost can come as early as November. The last frost is usually in early March. Watering should be weekly for most traditional plants, monthly or less for succulents and cactus. Cold dry winds can damage some plants if their roots do not have access to water, and water within the cells of succulents during frosty temps can cause internal rupturing and damage.

To keep your fescue lawn green through the winter, you'll need to apply Dr. Q's Winter Gem (23-3-7) fertilizer before it goes dormant, and then again throughout the winter. Without adequate nitrogen, lawns will go dormant after the first hard frost and will be extremely difficult to green up again until spring. In order to make sure your fertilizer and water get to the root zone of your lawn, it's a good idea to de-thatch and rake thoroughly first.

Expensive irrigation system damage. Because the ground seldom freezes here, irrigation systems are often not properly installed. In a proper installation, all pipes should be buried six to eight inches deep or permanently covered, with a drain valve installed at the low end of each line. Pressure Vacuum Breaker (PVB) valves exposed to the elements need to be protected to avoid messy and expensive repairs. Products like Insulated Foam Pipe Wrap for exposed pipes, or Frost Bite custom covers for PVB's are great for helping to prevent a winter irrigation nightmare. Exposed lengths of PVC pipe can be protected by prefabricated Tube Pipe Insulation. If a hard freeze is expected, close the valve to your system. Then drain your drip system by removing the end cap. This will prevent damage to soft pipes by the expansion of frozen water.

SHRUBS. It's important to give soft, green summer growth the chance to harden up. Soft new growth is easily damaged by frost. You can help harden up your plants for winter in two ways; Water very infrequently and avoid late fertilization any time after mid November.

When it comes to covering some of the tender shrubs in our landscapes, burlap is effective but taking it on and off again can be quite a chore. Then there's the challenge of getting it to stay put.

These new plant protector bags take these challenges off of your back, and can make it a lot more practical to provide cold-protection for those few "special" plants that you care so much about.



Don't forget to mulch around the base of your plants. This is another important tool in preparing your landscape for winter. Surface mulch, over the root zone of plants, keeps the ground from freezing and allows root growth to continue all winter.

The only plants that should be pruned in the winter are deciduous trees and shrubs. These should be pruned around New Years or just after, when solid dormancy is likely to have occurred. Do not prune evergreens or desert plants until early spring.

Most desert type plants grow whenever water is available to them. Since new growth is frost tender, it is very important to limit the water and fertilizer given to these plants, especially cactus, during the winter. Most desert-adapted species can survive a cold winter well with one good soaking at the end of October or mid November, then no more water until late February.

Your cactus may look shriveled, but will survive the severe cold much better when it is a bit dehydrated. Spring watering will resurrect them quite nicely!

If we do experience a rather warm winter. Your watering schedule will need to adjust for and reflect this. Warm winter watering should be about two times per month. Do not prune desert plants in winter. It induces soft new growth that can be damaged by cold weather. In early spring, apply a specialty fertilizer like Dr. Q's® Desert Plant and Cactus Food to get showy blossoms.

Burlap

3x12

starting at

\$5.49*

ea.

Available at your local Star Nursery

*Offer expires 02/28/2010.

Gardening in Cooler Climates, Utah & mountain areas

Taking care of your irrigation system

As soon as we get under 60 degrees for a daily high temp, your watering days should be no more than once per week. Still you should water deeply, not just five or eight minutes. Keep the salts away from your plants by maintaining deep watering throughout the year. If your using a drip system, these are rated in “gallons per hour”, which indicates the typical run time – an hour or more. Succulent plants like cacti may not need any water until next spring. If we experience prolonged warmer spells then give them a watering at that point.

Severe cold can and does damage irrigation parts; like PVB (pressure vacuum breakers) and exposed piping and tubing. There is now a great product available for protecting PVBs, and hose bibs (picture shown to the right). These are made by Frostbite and conveniently protect against the damage that can be caused by a ruptured component.

If temperatures below 18 F. are predicted, then it might be a good idea to turn off the supply to your PVB and drain it.

This can be accomplished by shutting off the bottom valve which supplies water to the system. Then manually open the automatic valves(s) and by opening the top

“air” valve to the right, this will allow water to drain from the valves and line. When the system has no water in it, damage will not occur during the cold snap.

Protecting exposed water pipe is always a good idea where temperatures get well below freezing and stay there awhile. Don't wait until the last minute to provide this protection or you might discover that your local nursery or home center is out of stock of some or all the items you need.

There are pipe covers that quickly and easily fit over exposed piping and provide an aesthetic technique for accomplishing this. Burlap works as well, but make sure you wrap it around enough times to provide good thermal protection.

A little bit of proactive effort on your yard and irrigation system can and does save expensive repairs or replacements later. Walk your landscape now and make a list of what needs protection and which supplies you'll need to protect them. **Don't put this off!**



Winter lawn care in Utah

If you have a fescue lawn and want it to look green and healthy throughout the winters, here are a few tips:

- December is the time to add more nitrogen rich fertilizer or soil amendment.
- If it is your first year of using organic fertilizers, this is a great time to have a soil test so you will know how your soil has reacted to the new regime.
- If during the summer or fall you did some over seeding, it is good idea to add a potassium rich fertilizer that will strengthen your lawn for the winter.
- Our weather has been exceptionally dry, make sure to do a final heavy watering, and ensure there is plenty of moisture in the soil.
- Never use your frozen yard for additional parking or walkway as this damages the grass. Fescue is tough, but it does have its limits!

Utah's cold loving conifer trees

Because the areas surrounding our Southern Utah stores are higher elevation, we can provide some very beautiful and cold hardy conifer (cone producing, pine-type) trees. These are only available in our Utah stores as they wouldn't do well in the Valley or where it gets 100+ degrees.

The Atlas Cedar is a good example and has striking silvery blue needles, and stay conical in shape throughout it's youth. This tree does become massive (40 to 60 feet tall) when mature. Then there is The Austrian Black Pine. It produces stiff, long (about four inch) dark green needles that bunch at the stem and produce a bottle-brush appearance on the branches. As the name implies, Austrian black pines are native to Europe.

If you have a smaller lot that might not afford much space for full-size trees and shrubs, you can still have room for a few dwarf conifers, which usually don't get taller than 4 feet in 10 years. Dwarf conifers can serve as versatile plants regardless of how much space you have.

Take the Mugho Pine. This little guy (grows to about 4 feet) could double as a very attractive little shrub. A nice variation to add to your landscape. It's really a beautiful little tree with a roundish shape. Very dense needle pack, so it makes a nice formal presentation if you wish.



We also need to consider the Dwarf Alberta Spruce, a miniature with bright densely branched green foliage. This pretty little tree retains a perfect conical shape without trimming, and rarely needs pruning. Isn't that nice! Summer heat and humidity are not to its liking, so try to locate it where it gets some afternoon shade but otherwise good light. The north or east side of the house is probably the best location.

One thing is certainly true about the Desert Southwest – There are a multitude of varying climates! So, depending on where you live in this desert, we'll have the varieties that thrive in your area at your local Star Nursery. **If you don't see them – ask!**

Nitra King ^{BEST}

..... **in stock and ready to rock!!!**

- High Quality two pellet combination correctly sized for turf application
- More ammoniacal nitrogen for Longer Lasting response
- 2.2% Iron for Deep GREEN color from a BEST® Homogeneous Pellet.

Nitra King . . . the cool season King.
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Spread The Word **Simplot**

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Community Associations & seasonal events

Star Nursery Go to www.StarNursery.com and click on "Events - Seminars & Special Links" Stay up-to-date on Gardening Happenings in the area!

Southern Nevada Water Authority

Nevada Cooperative Extension, 8050 Paradise Ste # 100, Las Vegas
Xeriscape Principles, conservation programs, review of codes, drought restrictions and the techniques and benefits of "Upgrading to Xeriscape."

Tues. December 8, 8 am - 12 noon

Details or enrollment; call 702-862-3756 (258-3946 Spanish)

UNCE Master Gardener Training

Nevada Cooperative Extension, 8050 Paradise Rd. Ste #100, Las Vegas
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Tues. December 8, registration

Details; Mary Bertsch @ 702-257-5501

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Plant Talk

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Q. I have a privet hedge in my yard and need to turn up the hard packed soil. I also need to drain my hot tub that hasn't been treated in nearly a year. My question is can I safely drain the water into the hedge and kill two birds with one stone (without killing the hedge - LOL!)? The chlorine should be gone by now. - Ms. Cali Dreamin, NV

A. As long as no salts were used I see no problem. However with a year of no treatment, the "fragrance" may be more than you or your neighbors want! - Mark

A. It would be great to make use of otherwise wasted water, but I would be concerned about the salt level (body lotions and whatever else). I'll be frank - try using the water on turf or ornamental grass (these are more tolerant). - Frank

Q. I plan to put a new tree in my back yard. I have very little shade now and want to plant it next to the wall in the back. Could I plant a Eucalyptus and put it within two feet of the wall? How should I water it?
- A. Closecall, Las Vegas

A. Eucalyptus is a very large rooted tree even though it is often more narrow and tall. The roots would likely damage the wall by the time the tree was mature. - Frank

A. I do not recommend ANY tree within five feet of any structure. I would say plant the tree at least a distance equaling half the full grown width of the canopy. Mark my word, that will help prevent neighbors from butchering your tree hanging on their side of the wall and prevent damage. - Mark



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