



Prime's Clippings

Prime Landscape Services, Inc.



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www.PrimeLandscapeServices.com

817.461.4000 office

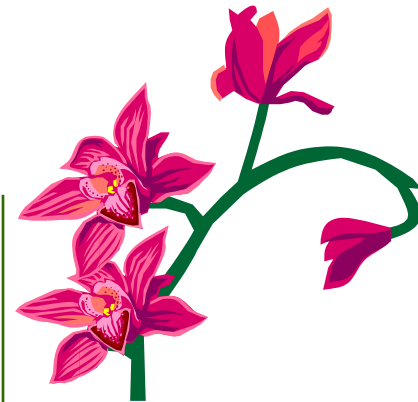
817.274.5459 fax

Hello Spring, Glad You Could Make It!

It was beginning to look like we were going to skip Spring and move right into summer with strings of 80 degree plus days and the second driest March on record, but the cool spell during the last week of March at least makes it feel more spring-like. The light rain that fell raised the rain gauge to 0.05 inches for the month, a shade above the 0.01

record. Six straight months of below-average rainfall have left much of the area with a rainfall deficit of almost 8 inches since last fall. March and April don't usually call for watering, but if you haven't started already you need to start sprinkling about once a week until we get a few rains.

The next two months are always the busiest months of our gardening season. We will start weekly mowing and regular shrub trimming in April as it warms up, and start changing out annual color beds as the pansies fade. Help us to help you! Read our tips and advice, and call with questions or if we can help you in any way.



Spring and Winter Weeds

You never notice when you don't have weeds, but boy don't you notice them when they are there? This year has not been particularly bad for spring weeds due to the dry winter. However, weeds always grow faster than Bermuda and St Augustine and thrive on minimal moisture so this transitional period before lawns are fully out of dormancy is always the weediest time of year. Remember that at this stage of a broadleaf weed's life it takes 2-4 weeks for it to completely shrivel and go away after a post-emergent application.

Grassy weeds like poa annua, wild rye, and rescue grass are a different story. They are not controlled by the standard broadleaf weed applications that are in "weed and

feed" products you can buy or in the standard programs that commercial lawn care companies apply. We have specialty chemicals available for all of these except poa, but these products require temperatures above 80 to work. Remember that all of the cool season grasses will burn out as temperatures climb. All herbicides cause some stress on your lawn, particularly when lawns are just coming out of dormancy. Be aware that the more you spray for weeds the slower your lawn will green up. This is especially true for St. Augustine. It is really a Catch 22, with probably the best solution to only try to control these types of weeds when there are really a lot of them. Bermuda though is much more forgiving.

Our goal is to fulfill the needs of the customer by providing timely, quality services and products.

Thanks for your business!

April Chores:

- Aerate lawn
- Mow weekly
- Plant spring flowers & shrubs
- Mulch beds
- Treat fire ant
- Check/set irrigation system
- Start trimming hedges
- Weed control in beds
- Fertilize lawn

Introducing On-Line Bill Pay — FREE!

Many of our client's have asked for the ability to pay their bills on-line, and starting in April we will finally be able to offer this convenient and time saving service.

Simply provide us with your e-mail address. When you receive your bill via email,

just click on the handy link to enter your bank information. It's quick *and* secure.

Go green by going paperless - it's the way of the future. Conducting business via email and on-line bill paying is a winning proposition for everyone. We conserve our

country's valuable resources by using less paper and all the energy that is consumed in the processing and delivery of mail. And need we remind you of the cost of stamps?

Save time and money today with on-line bill pay!

How to Water Newly Planted Shrubs and Trees

This is just a reminder to anyone that is having new plants installed. We have had virtually no rain this spring, but even with rains your new shrubs and trees may need a little TLC.

Although sprinkler systems will supplement rains adequately on lawns and established plants, most new plants need to be thoroughly soaked at least once a week until they get established, and very few sprinkler systems are capable of soaking an entire root ball. ***This means that if you are not receiving a really good soaking rain, you need to get***

the old water hose out and hand water your new plants weekly. The bigger the plant, the more important this is.

A general rule is that most plants like a well drained soil, so container grown plants are usually planted in an organic mix that drains very well. Most container plants are watered daily at the nursery and sometimes going without water for even a couple days can dry out the root ball to the point of damaging or even killing the plant. When your new plants are taken from that container and placed in soil, the

same affect can be seen, although usually not quite as rapidly. When a healthy plant fails within just a few weeks of installation, 95% of the time it is due to that root ball being allowed to dry out. We'll chalk up 4% to the other culprit, over watering, and 1% to a damaged root ball.

Although we do not warranty plants that we find to be under or over watered, in the interest of good customer relations we always allow for a generous margin of doubt. But PLEASE help us keep your new plants looking good by watering correctly.

How sprinkler heads are supposed to work

"Your guys hit my sprinkler head with the mower"! Believe me, neither one of us wants to hear that. Our crews mow over 300 acres of lawn each week, passing over thousands of sprinkler heads without a problem. And there is the key—sprinklers are designed and installed as *underground* systems. A properly installed head should be at or just above grade, and a properly functioning head will retract back into the ground after it waters. In both cases, *a lawn mower cannot damage a head that is working properly.*

Over time, several factors affect sprinkler head performance and


may render the head subject to accidental breakage. The seal around the riser hardens with time and springs wear out preventing retraction. Soils settle and move, sometimes leaving the head sitting too high. Heads also sink or have dirt build up around them, leaving the head below grade. This is very common and allows dirt to seep into the head around the seal. This grit causes the nozzle to stick in the up position or not retract fully, leaving the nozzle just high enough to be clipped by a mower, but not high enough to be seen. These are virtually the only two ways that

heads are broken by mowers. Sprinkler systems require routine maintenance, especially in the spring when they have been off for a few months. Our crews try to do their best and rarely do we have an incident where an employee intentionally damages something, and of course we will take responsibility for negligence.

We will be happy to replace or repair any bad heads on your system for our standard repair rates, but we respectfully ask that we not be expected to replace defective heads for free if a mower accidentally hits one.

Annual Color Coming Soon!

Most of the pansies that survived the unusual ice storm this year look good now but will fade fast as warm

 weather approaches. We plan to use all of our old standards this year but are also trying assorted new plants that have performed well at the Arboretum trials.

Call ahead for special requests. Availabilities will vary weekly.



Lawn Diseases and Pests

The dry weather has kept us from seeing Brown Patch fungus on St. Augustine, but there have still been a few lawns with weak yellow patches indicating Take All Patch. Treat with peat for this problem. It's still too early for chinch bugs and any grub worm damage will be a result of last summer's infestation. Wet weather, if we ever get any, may bring other problems to watch for, but so far we have seen few issues.

Got Mulch Yet?

Don't forget to mulch your beds before the summer heat arrives! Repeat after me, the Mulch Mantra:

"Mulch saves water, mulch reduces weeds, mulch improves the soil, and helps your garden succeed."

"I pity the fool that don't use mulch."

Mr. T - from the never released "Herb Garden" episode of The A Team.

