



August 1, 2011



# Prime's Clippings

Prime Landscape Services, Inc.

### Award Winning!

Prime won two more state awards for projects we did in 2010.

See page two for details



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## Midsummer Report Card — F-

( and regardless of what a politician might say we can't blame it on overpaid weathermen )

Last year we caught a great break with lots of rain in July, but we haven't been able to get Uncle Rico's time machine to take us back a year for a do-over so I guess we're stuck with this awful drought. There really isn't any saving grace for this weather other than the fact that only a few municipalities in the DFW area have enacted water restrictions so far. However, as this drought persists, expect to see more restrictions. Southlake and a few others are down to two days a week. Most expect to start restrictions by September unless we get some hur-



ricane effect rains soon. Remember in the fifties we had prolonged drought for several years.

Today, with our larger population base, the demand on water resources is far greater and the affects are being felt already. Aqifers are down, lakes and rivers are down, and conditions in the Austin/San Antonio area are substantially worse than what DFW has seen so far. Use your water wisely to maintain your investment in your landscape, and hopefully we can maintain our water resources adequately to see this through. (See below for tips on how to save water)



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

**Thanks for your business!**

## Fall is for Planting

No, this is really not a joke. *How, you ask, can you talk about planting when we are struggling to keep our plants alive in this heat?* Well, provided that weather patterns return to normal, fall is really a great season for planting most of our landscape ornamentals. Trees, shrubs, and perennials that are planted in September through December get to take advantage of mild temperatures and normally some regular rainfall. Now of course it is always possible to have an unusual winter event such as the ice storm of last February, but that is usually the exception, not the norm. Root systems thrive in our mild fall weather and grow

vigorously all winter, giving you bigger, healthier plants next year.

The fall planting season starts in September, so this gives you one month to contact us, make an appointment, get your estimate or plan, tweak it, and get on the schedule. And this year we have been inundated with requests for bids, so right now we are already at least two weeks out on estimates. **Call today to start the process!**



### More Bang For Your Watering Buck

- Run sprinklers between 12:00AM and 7:00AM
- Inspect sprinklers regularly for leaky seals around heads, broken pipes, etc, *and repair them!*
- Divide your watering into two start times—this gives the first cycle time to soak in, giving you a deeper saturation (which means deeper roots) and reducing runoff. As a general rule run sprays 6-8 minutes each time and rotors for 15-20 minutes each time with two start times.

### August Chores:

- Mow regularly & leave clippings on lawn
- Treat or watch for chinch bugs, gray leaf spot, and grub worms
- Check sprinkler system
- Mulch beds
- Hand water dry spots, annuals, and newly planted areas
- Prune roses and fertilize for a big Fall show!

## August is the Month for Grub Worm Control

Don't forget! August is the best time of year to treat for grub worms. Most of our grub damage is brought on by the larva of the June beetle, and they are easiest to kill at an early stage of their growth. Not every yard will have a large enough population to cause damage, but if you have had one in the past you may be in a location that is prone to infestation. Lawns close to street lights where June bugs gather are often hit, and ironically they may attack well watered lush lawns—maybe it is easier for them to dig. They will start doing serious damage to turf over the next two months, so treat now to prevent damage.

### Prices start at just \$75.00!

(up to 2500 sq ft Prices based on sq footage of turf)



Fernando the grub worm

You better watch out  
You better apply  
If you want a nice lawn  
I'm tellin' you why  
Fernando is coming to town.

He knows which lawns are lush now  
He knows when roots are plump  
He's gonna' do some damage  
So you better get off your rump!

**(and call Prime!)**

### Protect your New Plants!

This summer has been brutal and there is no change in sight. Don't forget to pay attention to anything you have planted this year, and ***hand water new trees and shrubs!***

### Prime to attend annual awards dinner

The Texas Nursery and Landscape Association will host the annual Texas Excellence in Landscaping Awards dinner in Dallas on August 18th. Prime is the proud recipient of the Bronze Award for a residential landscape design and night lighting project over \$100,000 and won Honorable Mention for a commercial landscape design over \$300,000. Mark designed the residential, and teamed with John on

the commercial project. Thanks to our clients for allowing us the opportunity to create these wonderful landscapes.



### Drip Irrigation—the good and the bad

In 2009, our state enacted legislation designed to conserve water. A noble and necessary concept, as the North Texas Council of Governments estimates that demand in the DFW area will exceed availability by 32% by the year 2050. But this legislation, like so many laws enacted, has rules both good and bad. I could go on far too long griping about the cons and praising the pros, but instead I'll focus on one issue that has been rearing it's ugly head lately.

We are now mandated by the state to install drip irrigation in any areas less than 48 inches wide between two hard surfaces, and some cities have taken these minimum standards even further. Arlington, for example, requires drip in *all* non-turf areas, and all areas less than 60 inches wide.

There are two types of drip, in-line drip tubing and single emitter drip lines. The single emitter system is the most accurate method of applying water to individual plants. Each plant will have one or more 1/4" tubes with a specific gph flow putting water right at the base of the plant. You select the flow based on the plants water requirements, so for example a yucca may have a .5 gph emitter and a holly a 2 gph emitter as the holly requires about 4 x as much water. In-line drip is comparable to a soaker hose, and this is what is installed in 90% of the applications. Typically, the drip tubing is laid in rows 12" apart with a 12" spacing on the drip holes so you have water coming out evenly every 12" throughout the area. Now all this sounds good on paper, but there have been a few frustrating issues starting to show up.

First of all, in both systems you have hundreds or even thousands of feet of tubing throughout the area. Tubing is easily damaged by hoes and shovels, and you can pull the 1/4 tubing out when raking or pulling weeds. Rats and squirrels have also chewed holes in tubing, and sometimes emitters become clogged. Therefore, a drip system requires much more monitoring, and simple garden chores such as weeding must be done very carefully. Another drawback has been installing drip in existing beds. How would you like your jasmine trenched every 12 inches? There's not much left. We have also seen a lot of issues with even distribution using in-line tubing, regardless of what the manufacturers say. I have plants sitting 6" from an emitter that are dead because the water is going straight down and missing them, and it is especially hard when trying to establish new plants. And my last gripe is when we are required to use this tubing in lawns. During really dry conditions you end up with a green spot every 12 inches, and now you can't aerate either, a practice that is proven to conserve water! Oh yeah—drip is also more expensive to install too.

Hopefully the water savings will outweigh the headaches in the long run, but just remember that drip is not a "set it and forget it" type of system. Individual emitters work great, in-line tubing is fair, but all of it requires diligent monitoring.