



PRIME'S CLIPPINGS

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July 1, 2010



We will be closed Monday, July 5th.

Have a great holiday!!



Thank you for your business!

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

Nothin' but blue skies...

Some of us got a few showers as the first month of summer drew to a close but overall June was a very dry month. And May, normally our wettest month was not much better. Result? We are off to a tough summer season and having to depend exclusively on our sprinklers to keep our lawns and landscapes going. Temperatures haven't done us any favors either,

with typical 90—100 degree days consistently. Depending on how well established your plants are and how deeply you are watering, you can lose some plants after just a few days without water. It is critical to keep your eye out for problems like broken or malfunctioning sprinkler heads and stay on top of this difficult time of year.

Sprinklers 101

Sprinkler systems are an indispensable item for keeping an attractive landscape in the Texas heat, especially for busy people on the go. A well installed system eliminates the need for dragging hoses and most hand watering. Except for wide open lawn areas, it is difficult to have perfect coverage from your sprinklers. There will always be some shrubs or trees that block some heads, but overall a good sprinkler system can save you time and money. Sprinkler systems have an electronic controller that sends a 24 volt charge to a solenoid which opens a valve allowing water to flow to the heads which then perform their function hydraulically. Just like anything with moving parts, sprinklers require routine maintenance and occasional repairs.

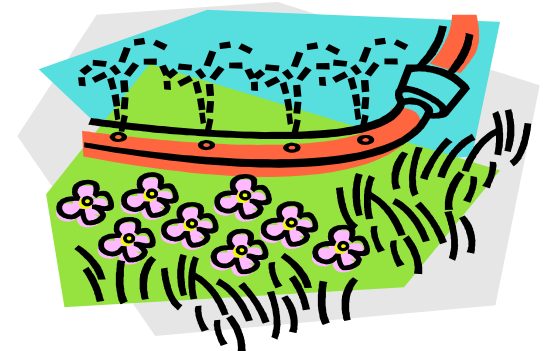
Another common problem is defective valves. As valves age they may stick partially or completely open. A partially open valve will allow water to seep constantly from one or two heads. There is usually nothing wrong with the head; it's the valve that is stuck. If the entire zone won't shut down, that means the valve is stuck completely open. The doublecheck valve will have to be turned off until repairs can be made.

Problems can also develop in the wiring, with the most common being a shorted solenoid or wires destroyed by fire ants. The usual result is a section that will not turn on at all.

Simple plumbing problems such as a broken pipe or head can be tackled by most do-it-yourselfers, but electrical troubleshooting and valve locating requires specialized equipment and is often best left to a knowledgeable repairman.

Here are a few things to be aware of:

Pop-up heads, both spray types and rotor types eventually wear and may have to be replaced. As the seals deteriorate, the nozzle may stick in the up position causing a mower to clip it off. On very old systems or systems with inferior brands of heads, there may be so much water leaking around the seals that the heads won't even pop up any more. Rotors may also eventually stick and fail to rotate, leaving large dry areas. Spray heads in beds will also become blocked as shrubs grow, and in many cases the focus will shift from spraying over the top of the ornamentals to spraying into the foliage and letting the water drip down to saturate the root zone.





What's Buggin' You?



Webworms, tent caterpillars, and bagworms are busy at work in your neighborhood. They won't eat every plant, but they are capable of defoliating their favorite hosts in short order. Redbuds, pecans, mulberry, ash, and some elms are their food of choice, but they are also attacking several other varieties of trees to some extent, and even some shrubs and vines. Bagworms attack junipers, arborvitae, cypress, and cedar trees. Although the trees will normally recover and put out new leaves, they expend a lot of energy doing this. In the wet summer of 2007 we had 3 generations of tent caterpillars and the damage they did was tremendous. Our much drier season this year won't likely be as bad, but the dry soil conditions make it harder for trees to rebound after losing significant foliage. Weak and stressed trees are more susceptible to other insect infestations and diseases, so the webworms may set the stage for the decline and death of a tree. Smaller infestations may be pruned out, but if you have entire trees covered you need to spray with a chemical insecticide or an all natural bacterial product called Bacillus thuringiensis or BT. BT coats the leaves and interrupts the digestive sys-

tem when eaten. Worms stop eating within a day and die within a few days. There is also another natural product called spinosad that is highly effective. Whether you use the organic or chemical approach a high pressure sprayer is needed to break through the protective webs of tent caterpillars. It may also be impractical to spray very large trees due to the type of equipment needed to reach the higher areas and the corresponding cost.

Fireants will migrate and build new mounds after every rain. That means areas that have been free of fire ants during the dry conditions we have had may become reinfested after a good rain. Even if you have treated with baits or mound drenches a couple times and seem to have eliminated the ants on your piece of real estate, don't be surprised to see them move in from adjacent properties. Bait treatments offer the best long term control for the price.



Don't forget about me, Hernando the chinch bug!!

Hot Summer Savings!!

Does your idea of "fun in the sun" involve shovels, getting filthy, an aching back, and heat stroke? No? Then take advantage of our heat-crazed brains and let us take care of some of those big jobs you have been putting off!

Remember when it was raining all winter and your house nearly flooded? Don't think it won't happen again!

How about that old tie wall that is turning into worm food? Shouldn't it be replaced before your yard slides off into

the abyss? What about that larger patio you always wanted?

Book select hardscape projects in July and mention our newsletter for 10% off!!

Includes drain systems, retaining walls, stone edging for beds, landscape lighting, flagstone patios and paths, ponds and waterfalls, and more!

Webworm and fungicide applications starting at only \$75.00!



July Chores

- Mow regularly & do not catch the clippings
- Deep water during the hot months
- Mulch all bare areas
- Hand water dry spots, annuals, & new plants
- Treat fire ants after rains
- Watch for powdery mildew, chinch bugs, and grubs

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