

PRIME'S CLIPPINGS

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**Thank you for
your business!**



Have a Happy
Halloween!

Finally— say bye to 100 degrees

Ahh, October. As the days shorten we can surely look forward to some cooler weather and maybe a rain or two. September gave us a little break with a couple widespread rains, but we are still running a huge rain deficit. Combine that with average daily temperatures in the nineties and it still seems very summer-like right now. Trees continue to shed leaves in response to this lack of moisture, and as is obvious to even the casual

observer many trees and shrubs, even old mature ones, are still dying. Regular supplemental watering once or twice a week is still necessary to keep our lawns and ornamentals from declining anymore as we transition into Fall. Hopefully there will be enough rain by spring to lift our water restrictions, but with the reduced need for watering during the winter months we should be able to adequately maintain our gardens until Spring.



Just in case you've forgotten what one looks like

Fall Redemption

This year's drought has been so depressing many of us threw in the towel on our yards. But as the cooler weather moves in it is time to redeem some of our lost landscapes. Lets look at where to begin, and what not to do.

Consider these in your plans ahead of the weaker, thirstier plants that really struggled. And remember to put the right plant in the right place. If you really must plant that *#%!# azalea, don't put it where the west sun hits it!

Item 1: **Do keep watering.** Use your water wisely, and for gosh sakes don't over-water, but some people think they can turn it off when fall starts. This year more than ever, keep adequate moisture in your soil through the fall and winter to help your plants recover.

Item 4: **Don't cut down your "dead" trees until you are sure they're really dead.** Many trees and shrubs are in shock but may foliate again in the spring. If a branch turned brown and all the leaves stayed on, it is most likely dead. If it dropped all it's leaves, it may just be in shock. You can scratch the cambium in several spots to look for moist green tissue to help in your diagnosis. Large trees are not going to fall overnight. If you have a large tree that appears dead give it until spring.

Item 2: **Don't wait until spring to re-place a dead plant.** We always recommend fall as the best time to plant shrubs and trees, and that is especially true this year. We may still be on water restrictions in the spring. The sooner you plant, the larger and more established your root systems will be, and the greater the chance that your plants will get through the next summer.

Item 5: **Don't give up!** Yes, it is possible that these conditions could persist, but normal weather patterns will return at some point. Make good decisions on plant choices. Use good cultural practices like mulching and hand watering new shrubs. . Our Texas landscapes have lots of potential. Some years just require a lot more effort.

Item 3: **Do use "Texas tough" plants.** You don't need to go all native, at least not yet, but look at which plants survived this year and which ones really performed.

👍 What's hot

Lantana - very few annuals performed as well
 Sweet potato – did surprisingly well
 Knockout roses - didn't take too much to keep them looking good
 Dusty Miller, artemesias, pentas
 Salvias – leucantha, Gregg held their own
 Water conservation –we no longer have a choice
 Texas Rangers –they came through the heat ok!

What's not 🙄

Any plant that didn't get at least some water
 Begonias - none in the sun, but green leaf varieties did better than bronze in the shade
 Indian Hawthorns - couldn't take the intense sun
 Impatiens - struggle every August, died this year
 Outdoor activities in July—August.
 Hernando the chinch bug - he's outa here!



Pond Pulse

Pond owners need to keep up with the leaves from here on out. Most of our trees are dropping steadily, so be sure and clean the skimmer basket regularly. There is always the question of whether or not to cover the pond when the leaves really start coming down. If you have a lot of trees it may be a good idea. It really comes down to aesthetics

and how much you are willing to use your pool net. Whatever you do, you cannot leave an accumulation of leaves in the bottom for an extended period of time.

We have an effective method of installing a leaf net over pvc hoops that will save many hours of dipping leaves out with a pool net. Call Spencer or John for details.

Pansy Countdown!

The time to change out our summer color is finally here! Mums can go in now to replace that worn summer color and switched to pansies in November. Some varieties of mums can be planted and kept as perennials if you have the space. We will start planting pansies in mid October or whenever we get sustained cooler weather to avoid heat stress and aphids. Aphids seem to really hit pansies hard in warm weather, so the cooler it is the better. Dianthus is probably the next best color plant after pansies, with snapdragons and primula tagging along, but none of these will bloom all winter like pansies. Violas are even

tougher than pansies, come in a variety of colors, and provide an interesting change of pace or a great low border around the taller pansies. Dusty miller are a great silvery foliage plant that mix well with pansies and are less finicky than cabbage or kale.

If there is any redeeming quality to the potentially dry winter that has been predicted, it is that pansies thrive in cool dry weather with a minimum of watering. The sooner you let us know about any special color requests the better. There may be shortages this year due to the tough summer that many growers went through.

It's Not Too Late For Fall Pre-Emergent!

The fall pre-emergent and fertilizer application is THE most important treatment you can do for your lawn. You can prevent many of the spring weeds by applying pre-emergent now and our fertilizer will strengthen the root system going into winter for a healthier lawn next year. If you aren't already scheduled for this important application please call us today!

October Chores

- Pull up spent annuals
- Cut off tops of spent perennials
- Divide perennials
- Plant spring-blooming perennials, cool season annuals, and wildflowers
- Turn the compost pile
- Don't forget to feed the birds!



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