

## TIPS FOR MAINTAINING XERIC LANDSCAPING AND IRRIGATION SYSTEMS

Since we live in the high desert where water is a scarce commodity, many landscape packages installed with new homes today are considered xeriscape packages or partial xeriscape packages. This means that you will have drought tolerant plants that require less water than the more traditional landscapes once used. However, many people forget that even drought tolerant, low water use plants need some time to establish themselves and acclimate to their conditions. Please follow the tips below to keep your landscaping package healthy and beautiful for years to come.

1. Plant watering schedule for **year one** with a **drip system**:
    - a. Spring – Every other day for 20 minutes (morning)
    - b. Summer – Every day for 30 minutes (early morning)
    - c. Fall – Every other day for 20 minutes (morning)
    - d. Winter – Once a week for 20 minutes when day time highs are above 50° (afternoon)\*\*\*
  
  2. Plant watering schedule **after year one** with a **drip system**:
    - a. Spring – Three times a week for 30 minutes (morning)
    - b. Summer – Every other day for 30 to 60 minutes (early morning)
    - c. Fall – Three times a week for 30 minutes (morning)
    - d. Winter – Once a week for 20 minutes when day time highs are above 50° (afternoon)\*\*\*
  
  3. Drip systems – Be sure to check your emitters (where the water drips onto the plant or ground around the plant) for blockages. Spring and mid to late summer are ideal times to do this. Over time, dirt and debris can clog the emitters causing your plants to not get the water they need.
  
  4. Sprinklers – Sprinkler systems are installed and set to make sure that ideal coverage of plants and grass is achieved. Be sure to check that the spray coming from the sprinkler heads is hitting all the areas once a month during spring and summer. You will start to notice brown spots if appropriate coverage is not occurring.
  
  5. Sod – To maintain the beauty of your lawn, you should fertilize 2 times a year (spring and fall) with a high quality fertilizer designed for our soil conditions (follow package directions) and try to keep pets from eliminating wastes on your lawn as this can cause brown spots to occur. If you do catch your pet doing their business, quickly pick up the solid waste (if any) and spray the area with water thoroughly to wash out the urine. Please following the watering schedule listed below for best results.
    - a. Spring – Every other day for 10 to 15 minutes (morning)
    - b. Summer – Every day for 10 to 20 minutes (early morning or evening)
    - c. Fall – Every other day for 10 to 15 minutes (morning)
    - d. Winter – Once a week for 10 to 15 minutes when temperatures are between 36 ° and 50 °, Twice a week when above 50 ° (afternoon)\*\*\*
- \*\*\*Make sure you water in the afternoon when temperatures are warmer so the irrigation system valve functions properly.
6. Timer Systems – If you have a timer installed, please be sure to read the manual that came with it about how to set the timer correctly to follow the suggested watering schedules mentioned above. We will be happy to answer questions at any time and give you a free lesson if needed.

## **OTHER GENERAL MAINTENANCE TIPS:**

### **Spring**

- Spread granular, slow-acting fertilizer. (This is optional if you fertilized in the fall or winter)
- Aerate the lawn to treat compacted soil
- Mulch with organic matter, if necessary
- Sharpen your mower blades at the start of the season

### **Summer**

- Learn the signs of bug infestation, and head them off before they get settled in
- Don't scalp your lawn. Because of our high desert climate, keeping it a little longer will help keep it from burning.
- Treat weeds and bare spots as soon as you see them
- Sharpen your mower blade again halfway through the season

### **Autumn**

- Water trees and shrubs thoroughly mulched before the first frost
- But don't over water! Plants and shrubs that drop their leaves (deciduous) should be expected to start look a little brown in October and November
- Mulch with organic material, or mow a layer of fallen leaves into the lawn
- Cutting the grass a bit shorter just before winter to prevent its matting under snow

### **Winter**

- Put burlap windscreens around less hardy plants if they're in exposed areas
- Use a broom to brush snow away from evergreen trees gently, to keep the weight from breaking the limbs
- If ice or snow does break tree limbs, have the limbs removed as soon as weather permits – damaged trees are prone to disease
- Putting markers at the edge of your lawn will help you avoid damaging it when you're shoveling snow
- Avoid walking on frosted or snow-covered lawns
- Use only non-salt de-icers for sidewalks and driveways, so the runoff doesn't harm plants
- Salt will damage grass, perennials, and shrubs, and will keep the plants from absorbing much-needed water
- Check any perennial plants during periods of thawing soil to see if roots popping out of the ground. If they have, gently push them back into place, and add mulch.