



Chandler • Arizona



## WaterSaver Newsletter

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September 2014

### It Ain't Easy Being Green

It's fall and that means overseeding season is upon us! It may surprise you to know that there is no law that requires growing a winter lawn, unless your HOA CCR's mandate it. The option of having a year-round green lawn requires considerable investment in labor, materials and the additional water required. In fact, more lawns in Chandler are overwatered in the winter months than in summer! Here are a few tips for [establishing a winter lawn](#) this fall. Using the proper techniques can save you money and help avoid spikes in water consumption.

1. Wait to overseed until nighttime temperatures are consistently below 65F - usually mid-October to mid-November.
2. Do not fertilize 4 - 6 weeks before overseeding. This will slow the growth of the Bermuda grass
3. Two weeks before overseeding, change the setting on your irrigation controller and cut the watering frequency in half for your turf stations. (Do NOT turn the water off completely).
4. Lightly verticut lawn areas to allow seed to contact the soil. Blades should only cut 1/4 inch into the soil - deeper will damage Bermuda stolons and rhizomes.
5. Scalp the lawn. Clippings can be used as a top-dressing after seed is spread.
6. Broadcast seed in two directions to achieve even coverage.
7. Cover the seed with 1/4 inch of mulch, clippings from scalping or steer manure to help retain moisture.
8. Water 3 - 4 times a day with just enough water to keep the top 1/2 inch of soil wet. Seed should germinate in about 7 days.
9. When grass is 1 inch tall, reduce watering to once a day.
10. After the second mowing, water once every 2 - 3 days to a depth of 4 - 6 inches.
11. When lawn is established, water once every week - usually after the 2nd or 3rd mowing.
12. If you have ET or 'Smart' controllers, change the setting to "cool season grass". This will take care of watering your winter lawn until late next spring.

If you have questions about your landscape, contact the Water Conservation Office at [conserve@chandleraz.gov](mailto:conserve@chandleraz.gov), call 480-782-3580 or visit [www.chandleraz.gov/water](http://www.chandleraz.gov/water).

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### Upcoming Events

September 4

[Drip Irrigation Design & Installation](#)

September 9

[Water Wise Edible Gardening](#)

September 11

[Seed Swap at Sunset Library](#)

September 13 & 20

[Create Your Own Oasis](#)

September 18

[Yard Watering & Timer Instruction](#)

September 25

[Irrigation Maintenance & Repair](#)

September 27

[Butterfly & Dragonfly Bash](#)

October 2

["Smart" Irrigation Controllers](#)

See complete schedule at [www.chandleraz.gov/water](http://www.chandleraz.gov/water)



## Monthly Watering Advice

### September

If you look closely there's a hint of fall in the air. Days are shorter, and nights and mornings are a little cooler. Many of the non-desert plants are starting to perk up, and all plants can be watered less often. To help minimize the impact of the current drought, we are encouraging all water customers to consider limiting, or forgoing, overseeding with winter rye. You can save over 8,000 gallons of water for every 1,000 sq.ft. of grass. Recommendations below are for plants that are established in the landscape (in the ground about 2 years).

#### Lawn watering:

- Summer grass (Bermuda) - once every 4 days
- Overseeded cool season grass (rye) - 4 times per day for first 7-10 days to germinate

#### If trees and shrubs are on the same valve:

- Desert Adapted - once every 18 days
- High Water Use - once every 9 days

#### Tree watering:

- Desert Adapted - once every 21 days
- High Water Use - once every 10 days

#### Shrub watering:

- Desert Adapted - once every 16 days
- High Water Use - once every 7 days

#### Groundcover and vine watering:

- Desert Adapted - once every 16 days
- High Water Use - once every 5-6 days

Cacti and succulent watering - once every 28 days

Annuals watering - once every 3-4 days

\*\*Reduce your landscape watering 30 to 50 percent by adjusting your irrigation each season.\*\* "[Landscape Watering by the Numbers: A Guide for the Arizona Desert](#)" will help you determine how much water to apply and how long to run your system. Request a free copy at [www.chandleraz.gov/water](http://www.chandleraz.gov/water) or visit the interactive web site at [www.wateruseitwisely.com](http://www.wateruseitwisely.com).

Note: These recommendations are general guidelines only and may need to be modified for your specific site conditions.

### Ask A Garden Goddess



**I want to plant a fall vegetable garden. What soil is best?**

You're standing on it! Seriously, our native soil is fine for vegetable or annual flower beds as long as you follow the *Secret Recipe*.

First apply water to the area you've chosen for your beds. It should be moist but not stick to your shovel. You'll need a finished soil depth of 12 inches so dig or rototill in 4 inches of native soil, 4 inches of compost or mulch and 4 inches of coarse sand.

Borders made of concrete block, wood, pavers or repurposed materials will keep your finished soil in place.

Why not come to the [Edible Gardening](#) class on September 9? See the Events section for details.

Email your question to [GardenGoddess@chandleraz.gov](mailto:GardenGoddess@chandleraz.gov)



### Water Wise Tips

Grandpa always said "Life is like an escalator: You can move forward or backward; you cannot remain still."

The City of Chandler has improved the utility billing software and technology so your monthly bill was slightly redesigned and [additional information](#) added. The new format provides a more organized, detailed view of City services and charges.

The current and previous meter readings, reading dates and gallons used are listed for your convenience. Last month's usage and the same month for the previous two years are shown for comparison purposes.

A 36-month water consumption graph on the bill promotes conservation by helping customers track their water usage, identify potential waste, and establish a water budget.

### Plant of the Month

Shrimp Plant  
(*Justicia brandegeana*)



Looking for a plant to lend a tropical feel to your landscape? Or one that will attract hummingbirds? Here's a selection that can suit both purposes.

[Shrimp Plant](#) is native to Mexico and grows equally well in native, fertile, or rocky soil as long as it receives filtered sun or morning sun and deep, infrequent irrigations. A heavy organic mulch will help to maintain soil moisture here in the low desert.

The unusual feature of this 2 ft. x 3ft. evergreen shrub is its colorful modified leaves (bracts) that resemble a shrimp's tail

