



Chandler • Arizona

WaterSaver Newsletter

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December 2013



Easy Solutions to Landscape Mistakes

Trees Staked Too Long, Too Tight or Too Close

Trees need to move in the breeze a bit in order for their trunks to strengthen. Remove the original nursery stake and replace it with 2-inch diameter wooden poles. Tie the trunk loosely between stakes with wire surrounded with garden hose.

Scattered color throughout the yard

Brightly colored foliage, flowers or fruit attract attention. When brilliant color is scattered around the yard, it may overwhelm the viewer. Instead, concentrate color where accent is desired. Use color to attract attention in focal areas of the house like the entry.

Irrational Irrigation

Almost nothing needs water daily. Watering too often and not deep enough can make your plants vulnerable to pests and diseases. When temperatures are cool, plant water needs are reduced. Water deeply following the December watering schedule for best results.

Wrong Pruning Tools

Put away your gas or electric trimmers. Use bypass hand shears or loppers and follow [selective pruning](#) practices.

Landscape Fabric

Often sold as a weed barrier, dirt collects on top and weeds grow anyway, water doesn't soak through it and, it rips and limits oxygen exchange with the soil which is needed for healthy plant roots.

If you have questions about your landscape, contact the Water Conservation Office at conserve@chandleraz.gov. Visit the Water Conservation website for more [landscape tips](#).

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Upcoming Events

December 1 - December 7

[Sedona Festival of Trees](#)

December 7

[Hummingbird Gardening](#)

December 1 - 31

[Celebrate Arizona's Water](#)

December 1 - 31

[Noches de las Luminarias](#)

December - Thursdays

[Chandler Farmers Market](#)

December 20

[Downtown Chandler](#)

[Artwalk](#)

January 18

[U of A Citrus Clinic](#)

January 14 - May 6

[Master Gardener Training](#)

See complete schedule at www.chandleraz.gov/water



Monthly Watering Advice

Ask A Garden Goddess



December

December and January are our coldest months, and plant water usage is at its lowest point. Keep in mind that too much water on plants encourages lush, active growth that is more prone to frost damage. Plants that are dehydrated or water stressed also incur more damage. Recommendations below are for plants that are established in the landscape (in the ground about 2 years).

Lawn watering:

Summer grass (Bermuda) - once every 30 days

Overseeded cool season grass (rye) - once every 14 days

If trees and shrubs are on the same valve:

Desert Adapted - once every 35 days

High Water Use - once every 18 days

Tree watering:

Desert Adapted - once every 45 days

High Water Use - once every 21 days

Shrub watering:

Desert Adapted - once every 30 days

High Water Use - once every 14 days

Groundcover and vine watering:

Desert Adapted - once every 28 days

High Water Use - once every 14 days

Cacti and succulent watering - if needed

Annuals watering - once every 10 days

Wildflower watering - once every 15 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 or visit the interactive web site at www.wateruseitwisely.com.

Bonus tip: To get up-to-date local weather and frost warning info, visit the National Weather Service Phoenix area web site at <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/psr/>

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

Last winter several of my plants were damaged by cold temperatures. How can I protect them?

There are several steps you can take to protect plants from cold.

1. Use cloth (not plastic) and cover completely to the ground on frosty nights. Remove cloth during the day.
2. Water plants before predicted freeze. As water freezes it releases a bit of heat.
3. Wrap trunks of sensitive trees (ficus, citrus, etc.) loosely with burlap, fabric, or tree wrap.
4. Add heat by hanging holiday lights below the branches.
5. Use a 3 inch layer of mulch to help insulate the soil.

Follow this link for more information on [frost protection](#).

Email your question to GardenGoddess@chandleraz.gov



Water Wise Tips



Grandpa always said "You may be disappointed if you fail, but you are doomed if you don't try."

When it comes to finding and fixing leaks around your home that are draining your budget, Grandpa's quote is worth thinking about.

According to the [EPA](#), the average household loses more than 10,000 gallons each year due to leaks. This amount of water can wash 280 loads of laundry, take 600 showers or meet the average family's water needs for a month. Some water leaks are slow and difficult to detect. Fortunately, most leaks are easy to find if you know where to look and are simple to fix.



The most common culprits for leaks in the home are toilets. It may surprise you that as much as 30,000 gallons a month can be wasted by something as simple as a toilet flapper! Fixing toilet leaks is easy and inexpensive. Perform a dye test to confirm a leak, then check the overflow tube, lift chain and flapper.

Step by step instructions to [check for leaks](#) are available on the water conservation website or download the [toilet leak detection brochure](#).

Plant of the Month

Aloe (*Aloe* spp.)

Aloes are striking succulents from southern and eastern Africa that offer some of the best color for Arizona landscapes with their impressive and long-lasting show of flowers during the winter and early spring.



Their tubular flowers borne on long flowering stalks range in color from yellow to coral to intense red-orange and attract hummingbirds.

[Aloes](#) are very easy to grow, are heat and drought tolerant, and perfect for containers. They require little maintenance other than removing dead flower stalks and dividing crowded clusters. If grown in the ground provide occasional watering and good drainage. In our desert environment they prefer morning sun and afternoon shade, but will tolerate filtered shade.

Interesting varieties include the tree-like [Cape aloe](#) (*Aloe ferox*), [Coral Aloe](#) (*Aloe striata*), and [Medicinal Aloe](#) (*Aloe vera* or *Aloe barbadensis*).



For more landscape choices and design ideas to help you create a vibrant, attractive, colorful low water use landscape try [Water Wise Landscaping in Chandler](#).

Water Conservation E-News

This monthly newsletter will help you create stunning landscapes that use less water. Each issue is packed with personalized watering advice, notices about upcoming events, timely tips to maintain a healthy landscape, plus ways to reduce your water bill. Read past issues here - [WaterSaver newsletter](#).

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Sincerely,
Water Conservation Staff

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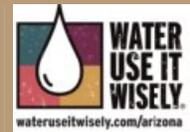
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Questions or comments? We want to hear from you! Contact us at conserve@chandleraz.gov



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