



ValleyCrest

Landscape Maintenance

11530 Davis Creek Court Jacksonville, FL 32246
(904) 292-0716 / Fax: (904) 292-1014

MEMORANDUM

DATE: 5/27/15
TO: All Customers
FROM: Valleycrest
RE: Drought Stress

We wanted to take a moment to inform all of our customers that we are now entering week three of drought like conditions throughout the northeast FL market. While there has been some sporadic rain in the Northern portion of the county, the southern market has seen far less rain activity. In conjunction with lack of rainfall, there have also been spikes of higher temperatures and adverse humidity. The weather forecast is somewhat more favorable the next two days for patchy rain but the 7 to 10 day forecast for the most part is about the same as we have been experiencing.

So what does this mean to our landscapes?

1. Hot spots in the turf and wilting plant material

We are finding “hot spots” or stressed turf on most of our job sights. In many cases we do monthly contract irrigation checks while other accounts may not have inspections in our agreement. There are also several accounts that have no irrigation system at all. Even on jobs that have irrigation within the agreement the odds of having stressed areas is likely as even the smallest irrigation problem such as a clogged nozzle or wind shearing will show itself when there is no rain. We are currently addressing any issues that we find in the field on a one by one basis. More than likely your Account Manager or our Irrigation Manager Rodney Hicks has been in touch with you to discuss. On jobs that have irrigation but we do not maintain the system, we are available if need be to assist your staff with repairs. For those areas that do not have irrigation we can only hope the weather will break soon.

2. Water restrictions

As we all know, we fall under the water restrictions outlined by the SJWMD. Currently this permits watering two days per week. However, as we find hot spots in the field and address the issues, we are watering manually to alleviate some of the drought conditions. We are also adding extra water to annual beds as they require it. If new landscape construction is occurring on your job there are more favorable guidelines for watering the new material. Unfortunately, under these water restrictions, two days a week is not going to provide the lush conditions associated with normal or frequent rainfall. In addition, even when a system is 100% functional it is often just a good supplement for rainfall and does not provide even distribution of water that rain will provide.

3. Pump/controller problems and outstanding work orders

There may be cases where we are currently addressing pump or controller problems. If this is the case these repairs take priority over smaller repairs. There may also be job sites that currently have pending work that has not been approved. If this is the case we recommend approving the work to prevent loss of your landscape investment.

4. Chinch bugs

The chinch bug is the number one insect problem associated with St. Augustine turf. The ideal time to come under attack is when the turf is dry. These insects will typically start in these areas and move throughout the property. They cause severe damage that in larger cases will require re-sodding. We are already finding this problem on many jobs and are treating as quickly as possible. Often it will require multiple applications of different insecticides as they have shown the unique ability to resist pesticides over time. Once the rain returns, or if repairs have been made to the irrigation system we will quickly know if an area will recover.

5. Turf types

Typically in North Florida we have St. Augustine, bahia and or zoysia turf. Each of these varieties responds to drought conditions in a different manner. St. Augustine will turn grey then yellowish/ orange. Often then the chinch bugs move in. Bahia grass completely shuts down in dry conditions often giving an appearance that it is dead. Fortunately it recovers very quickly with just a bit of water. These are often your un-irrigated areas such as pond banks and roadsides. Zoysia, much like bahia will go into shut down mode but will take a bit longer than bahia to green back up once water is applied.

6. Re-claimed water vs. city/well water

Those fortunate to have re-claimed water may not fall under the same restrictions as those who have well or city water. In these cases we have increased the water levels to supplement no rainfall.

7. Communication

As our teams work through each location addressing what we find we ask also that if you or your staff notice dryness to please contact your Account Manger if he or she has not

contracted you already as most of our jobs are only visited once a week and a lot can go wrong in between.

We appreciate your cooperation and patience and as always, we are striving for a highly satisfied customer.

Regards,

Your Valleycrest Team