



Newsletter Landscaping and Trails Committee

High Desert Gardening

October 2021

Mirehaven Streetscape Trees

S. M. Douglas

The Landscaping and Trails Committee (LTC) has been receiving questions about streetscapes from Mirehaven residents—What exactly is the streetscape? Who is responsible for these trees? What about weeds that grow in that area? According to the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) Design Guidelines (Revised December 14, 2020), the Streetscape is defined as the area between the street and the sidewalk (<https://www.delwebbmirehaven.com/Assets/The+Estates+at+Mirehaven+Community+Association+Digital+Assets/Design+Guidelines+December+2020.pdf>). A Streetscape tree is one of the deciduous trees (Appendix F, Design Guidelines) planted by Pulte, the developer. There is one Streetscape tree for each homeowner property and additional Streetscape trees planted in Common Areas.

Homeowners are responsible for maintaining the tree planted in the Streetscape in front of each house. Maintenance includes proper watering, fertilizing (when necessary), removing stakes (when appropriate) and pruning. As the trees grow, homeowners may opt to contract with a licensed and insured professional arborist to

assist with tree health care and pruning. **Homeowners are also responsible for controlling weeds in the Streetscape in front of their home.**

All tree and plant maintenance as well as weed control in Streetscape Common Areas are the responsibility of the Landscape Contractor hired by the Mirehaven HOA, and homeowners have no responsibility to maintain them.

Homeowners are also permitted to add plants (from Appendix D, Design Guidelines) in the Streetscape with the stipulation that no plant can overhang the sidewalk or street or block site views. Any Homeowner who wants to add plants must submit “Streetscape plan” to ARC for approval prior to planting (<https://www.delwebbmirehaven.com/Assets/The+Estates+at+Mirehaven+Community+Association+Digital+Assets/ARC+Form+December+2020.pdf>). **If a Homeowner decides to do this, they are responsible for maintaining the plants in their Streetscape.** Maintenance includes proper watering, fertilizing (when necessary), and pruning.

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Fall Gardening at Mirehaven

S. M. Douglas

Fall officially arrived Wednesday, 22 September 2021. Although we had near-record warm temperatures through much of September, we've recently experienced some cooler nights and mornings. However, the arrival of cooler temperatures and shorter days does not put an end to gardening activities. At this time, plants are putting energy into growing roots. Plant roots grow anytime of the year as long as soil temperatures are 40° F or higher—however, during summer, when soil temperatures are very high, root growth slows. Plants generally put out substantial root growth in early spring and again the late summer, fall, and early winter. Root growth continues slowly through the late fall and winter, as long as the soil is not frozen. Better root growth increases the number of nutrients stored in the plant over the winter.

Early Fall “To-Do” List

1. Watering

September and October can be deceptively dry, especially following our less-than-average monsoon rains. This is the time to reprogram your irrigation controller to account for changes in the water requirements of your landscape plants. If you have questions about setting your irrigation controller, an article “*Take the Guesswork out of Programming an Irrigation Controller*” is posted on the 505Outside website:

<https://www.505outside.com/2021/03/05/take-the-guesswork-out-of-programming-an-irrigation-controller/>. If you have any additional irrigation questions, you can contact AskAnExpert@abcwua.org.

The watering chart from 505Outside (ABC Water Utility Authority) will help to determine how much water **established**

plants need at this time of year. Most homes in Phases 1 and 2 have what would be considered established plants with the Pulte-installed landscapes. 505Outside states that plants generally require 30% less water during this time of the year compared with what they use in the summer. Daytime temperatures may still be warm, but shorter days and cooler nights in the months of September, October, and November lead to less evaporation, which means plants retain their moisture for longer periods of time. As you read the chart, note the frequency and depth of watering listed for different types of plants. For example, shrubs should be watered one time per week to a depth of 18 inches.

FALL WATERING RECOMMENDATIONS (SEPTEMBER - NOVEMBER) FOR GREATER ALBUQUERQUE AREA		
Plant Type	How Often?	How Deep?
TREES	2-4 TIMES PER MONTH	24" INCHES
SHRUBS	1 TIME PER WEEK	18" INCHES
FLOWERING PLANTS	1-2 TIMES PER WEEK	12" INCHES
DESERT ACCENTS	1 TIME PER MONTH	12" INCHES
GROUNDCOVER	2 TIMES PER MONTH	12" INCHES
GRASS: TURF (COOL SEASON)	2 TIMES PER WEEK	4" INCHES
GRASS: TURF (WARM SEASON)	1 TIME PER WEEK	4" INCHES
GRASS: ORNAMENTAL	1 TIME PER WEEK	12" INCHES
VINES	2 TIMES PER MONTH	12" INCHES

=MONTHLY
 =WEEKLY

Fall watering recommendations for established landscape plants.

From the 505Outside website:
<https://www.505outside.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/WBTS-all4-Final-OL-for-PRINT-7-5-x-6.pdf>

If you live in Phase 3 or installed any plants in 2020 or 2021, those plants are still considered to be **new transplants**, so the 505Outside watering chart is not appropriate for your landscape. All new transplants,

including perennials, ornamental grasses, shrubs, trees, and evergreens need deep soakings at least twice a week.

Watering—to the right depth and at the correct frequency—are very important to keeping plants healthy throughout the year, but is especially important in the fall and winter months. For complete information on the water requirements of specific plants, refer to the 505Outside website for the *Xeriscaping-The Complete How-To Guide* at: https://www.505outside.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/XeriscapeHowTo-2020_06122020.pdf.

2. Planting

Fall is a wonderful time to plant trees, shrubs, and perennials and by selecting native plants, you can benefit from developing a beautiful, low-water xeric landscape.

The cooler air temperatures and still-warm soil temperatures are ideal for establishing new transplants. However, it is important to note that you probably won't see a lot of new stem and leaf growth in the fall, since the plants are putting energy reserves into growing new roots.

Plants installed in the fall grow more rapidly in the spring—with more vigorous top growth and flowering because their roots were established over the fall and winter. With a more established root system, fall-planted trees, shrubs, and perennials are much better able to handle the harsh, drying winds of spring and the heat of summer.

While many plants can be planted in the fall, some plants, especially those from desert ecosystems like southern New Mexico, Mediterranean natives, perennial wildflowers, and warm season grasses should not be planted in fall. Why? When newly planted, their roots are less able to

survive our high desert winter temperatures. These should be planted in the spring through early August. Succulents are another group of plants that should be planted during the warmer part of the growing season.

3. Miscellaneous activities

October is a good time to refresh or replace containers with summer-flowering annuals with cool-season plants such as pansies, mums, and ornamental kale.

It is also time to continue to remove spent blooms from roses and other plants to encourage repeat flowering.

If you have placed your indoor houseplants outside for the summer, watch for chilling nighttime temperatures. These plants can be affected by sudden drops in temperature or prolonged periods of chill. When nighttime temperatures reach 45°F, it's time to bring them inside.

Be watchful for frost. The average date of the first freeze in Albuquerque is 29 October although the record is 8 October. The classification of freeze temperatures is based on their effect on plants:

- **Light freeze:** 29° to 32°F—tender plants are killed.
- **Moderate freeze:** 25° to 28°F—widely destructive to most vegetation.
- **Severe freeze:** 24°F and colder—heavy damage to most garden plants.

Note that frost dates are only an estimate based on historical climate data and are not set in stone. The probability of a frost occurring before the fall frost date is 30%, which means that there is still a chance of frost occurring before or after the given dates—which is why we've had fall frosts as early as 8 October.

Upcoming Educational Opportunities

The NMSU Cooperative Extension Service hosts a Zoom “Ready, Set, GROW!” Webinar Series in 2021. This series is presented by New Mexico Cooperative Extension Service, The NMSU Agricultural Science Center at Los Lunas, and the NMSU Department of Extension Plant Sciences. <https://desertblooms.nmsu.edu/ready-set-grow.html>

Upcoming “Ready, Set, GROW!” Webinars in 2021.

(Click session titles below to register for each class.)

- Oct 20 - **Healthy Soils**
- Nov 17 - **Home Composting**
- Dec 15 - **Holiday Plants**
- **Future topics:** Best Irrigation Practices, Fruit Tree Pruning, Pollinator Gardens, Gardening with Birds, and much, much more!

Gardening Questions?

You can send gardening questions to Southwest Yard and Garden - Attn: Dr. Marisa Thompson at: desertblooms@nmsu.edu
or
[Desert Blooms Facebook](#).

Other Topics

Do you have landscaping questions about community-specific issues or common areas in Mirehaven?

If so, the Landscaping and Trails Committee (LTC) would like to hear from you. Please send your questions to Robin Abret, chairperson of the LTC: rtabrett@hotmail.com.

LTC Newsletters

Since November and December are busy with holidays and fairly quiet times for landscaping issues, our next LTC Newsletter will be in January 2022. See you next year!