



*Gardeners Helping Gardeners Succeed*

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# All About Winter Watering

Autumn has arrived. Often, unknowing gardeners turn their irrigation systems off with the first freeze. Although it seems logical, this practice is not good for the health of your plants. Weather patterns in the fall vary from occasional freezes, particularly at night, to 60s and 70s in the daytime. Rarely do we have significant precipitation in October that soaks the ground, and it is a good deep soaking that is best for plants. Even though the temperature has dropped, the humidity is extremely low, the wind still blows and the sun is warm during the day. Plants continue to require water.

To suddenly stop watering will cause stress. A better technique is to harden off trees, shrubs, perennials and lawn. Hardening off means to gradually reduce the amount of water provided to your plants and lengthening the time between watering.

Since our weather systems often do not provide enough moisture, it will be necessary for you to water at least once per month through the fall and winter months. As the temperatures drop and remain at freezing, turn off and drain your irrigation system. To provide monthly irrigation, with sprinklers, turn on the system and drain again when finished or water with hoses. Turning on your drip system is not recommended.

Lawns require approximately 1 inch of water per month, according to the Western Regional Climate Center at the Desert Research Institute in Reno. Water plants, 5yrs or younger, out to the drip line; 5yrs or older, outside the drip line (the drip line is the outer reach of the branches all the way around the plant) - to a depth of 18 inches. Do this slowly so that water does not run off.

The Greenhouse Garden Center staff is available to assist you with any questions or concerns, so please feel free to come to the nursery or call us at 882-8600.