

***GARDENING BY THE
MOON***
**HEAT AND DROUGHT
SUMMER IN TEXAS!**

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Yes, it is that time of year in Texas! The heat has arrived and all the beneficial rains have stopped. When I am on site walking properties, I not only feel the heat, but I can see the stress the heat is causing plant materials. Monitor your plants closely and if you observe wilting or yellowing, and your soil is dry, water!

All the recent heat advisories have not only been hard for each of us, but those high temperatures have been creating harsh conditions for all of your trees, shrubs, container plants and turf. All plants respond to this by using more water. To counteract these harsh conditions for your plant material, and especially if you have new plantings, provide extra water!



Hand watering can be a very effective way of adding extra water efficiently to your plants. You can add water only where needed without wasting a large volume of water. Focus on watering trees, shrubs and container plantings first. Respond by adding extra water as soon as you see wilting or you observe the first sign of burned leaves to prevent leaf scorch.

FUN TIP: *Salvia greggii* is also known as Autumn Sage and it is a native Texas plant. It comes in many colors – red, pink, purple, white. It is one of the showiest flowering plants that will perform from late spring well into late fall. It grows in an attractive clump that is a maximum of 3 feet in height and 3 feet wide. These plants prefer the sun but will also grow in part shade. They can tolerate dry to medium soil moisture conditions. They attract butterflies and hummingbirds!



If your turf is browning and soil is dry and cracking, probe to a depth of 6 inches and if dry at that depth, add water. If you are applying adequate moisture and soil is moist at that depth, the brown turf could be due to heat stress. During excessive heat, turf will go into dormancy for protection. Fortunately, your turf can tolerate much drought and as soon as adequate moisture is applied or the extreme heat breaks, the turf will start growing again and green up. Turf likes water and fertilizer so make sure you are doing both of these things if you want to keep your turf green.



Browning turf can also be caused by grubworms and sod armyworms. If grubworms are present, the brown turf will lift right out of the ground and you will see white grubworms. If armyworms are present, you will see a hoard of worms eating your turf. If present, treat either of these worms with a granular turf insecticide such as Bio-Advanced Insect Killer.

This is Texas so the hot weather is here to stay for a while. Assist your plants with the water needed to survive this heat!