

Gardening by the Moon

February 2026



Shadow Creek HOA Landscape Seminar

Thursday, February 12th @ 7 PM
Emerald Bay Clubhouse

Ornamental Grass Cutbacks

February can be unpredictable in Texas because we can't always rely on the weather remaining mild. There might be another freeze. Keep an eye on the weather, and if it stays mild, you can begin pruning ornamental grasses starting February 15th. If the central bunches still show green growth, delay all pruning by a week or two.

The best practice is to cut all ornamental grasses back to 4-6 inches in height. Cut them flat, not at an angle or into a mound. This encourages good airflow, which helps prevent disease. Also, as the plants grow in spring, they won't leave a mound of brown or dead tissue at the base.

We recommend that ornamental grasses planted less than a year ago not be cut back to prevent disrupting their root development.



Freezing Temperatures and Your Landscape

Despite the freezing temperatures, remember that plants are surprisingly tough. Keep in mind that nature can bounce back. Be patient and give your plants the time they need to recover.

Also, be prepared as we might face another freeze in February.

- **Live Oak Trees**—In early spring, the leaves turn grayish brown and fall off the tree earlier than usual. This is not a problem for these trees, which drop leaves every year.*
- **Dormant Trees**— Red Oak, Bur Oak, Chinese Pistache, Lacebark Elm, Cedar Elm, and ash should not be damaged because most have already gone dormant before freezing temperatures.*
- **Narrow-Leaved Evergreen Trees**— Conifers such as Eastern Red Cedar, juniper, and pines will turn reddish due to the cold. These plants may shed extra needles now and in the spring. Don't worry about the reddish color; it will fade as new growth appears in the spring, and there should be no permanent damage.*
- **Broadleaf Evergreens**—Holly, Ligustrum, Magnolia, and other broadleaf trees can develop brown spots or brown leaves after a freeze. These leaves will fall off in the spring, and new buds will grow back. Some pruning might be needed, but wait until spring to do it. These plants should recover.*

- **Palm Trees**—Some palm trees may have burned fronds that need to be removed, but most will recover from this freeze by next summer.*

****Fertilize trees this month with ⅓ to ½ pound of slow-release turf fertilizer per inch of tree trunk diameter. Spread the fertilizer evenly from the trunk to beyond the tree's drip line. Your remaining landscape fertilizing tasks will be completed in March.***

- **Shrubs**—Shrubs like holly, boxwood, ligustrum, and others may develop brown spots on their leaves and experience yellowing or browning due to frost damage. These plants should recover. The leaves will drop in spring, and new buds will grow to replace them. Some pruning might be necessary, but wait until spring to perform it. Fertilize in March to boost their vigor.
- **Plants with Underground Rhizomes and Spreading Roots**— Dianella, Liriope, Ginger, Foxtail Fern, and others will have burned leaves. However, these plants will survive. Cut them back to the ground now or in March. Fertilize them in March to boost their vigor.
- **Ground Cover**— Asian Jasmine, Colorata Euonymus, Honeysuckle, and other ground covers will develop burned yellow-brown leaves. These leaves will fall off, and new ones will grow in the spring. Fertilize in March to boost their vigor.
- **Ornamental Grasses**—These grasses should have minimal damage since they were dormant. Cut them back and fertilize them in March.
- **Perennials**— These plants will have burnt leaves and will be cut back in March.
- **Outdoor Tropicals**— Plants like philodendrons may develop brown, water-soaked leaves. Watch these plants for signs of recovery. If they do not recover, replace them in the spring.
- **Annual Color**—If the color looks water-soaked, it will not recover and must be replaced. However, if the color has brown leaves, it can recover by spring.
- **Cool-Season Turf**— Ryegrass and Fescuegrass may turn yellow and brown, but they will recover quickly from cold weather. Fertilize to promote new growth.
- **Warm-Season Turf**— If St. Augustinegrass was not fully dormant before the freeze, it might have some damage, but it will recover in the spring. Since Bermudagrass was going dormant, it should have no lasting damage. Fertilize in the spring to encourage new growth. Lower the mowing height before fertilizing.

Home Landscape Maintenance Items

- Cut dead tissue from trees and plants
- Prune trees to lift canopies and remove deadwood
 - Due to Oak Wilt, stop pruning Live Oak Trees at the end of February

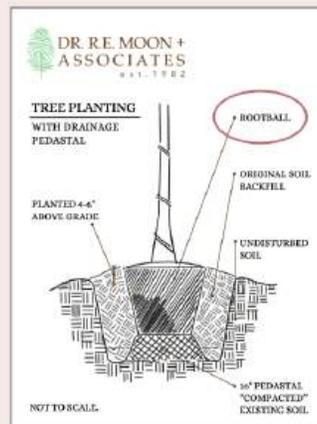
and do not prune again until the 3rd week in July

- ❑ Aerate turf before the application of pre-emergent and fertilizer
 - ❑ Mow your turf short- gradually lower mowing height down to 1.5 inches between now and the middle of March, and dethatch (if required) to prepare your turf for pre-emergent and fertilizer
 - ❑ Apply pre-emergent in February or March– when applying pre-emergent weed control, always follow the label directions to ensure you use the correct amount for effective, safe control– we recommend ***Preen Weed Preventer*** for beds and ***Scotts Halts Crabgrass and Grassy Weed Preventer*** for turf
 - ❑ Apply Neem Oil for the overwintering of insects & diseases
 - ❑ Prune Roses- cutback to approximately 18 inches after the middle of February
 - ❑ With all the rain and freezing temperatures, you should turn the irrigation controller OFF– if temperatures rise and rain decreases, set the irrigation timer to run once every two weeks this month
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Check your Tree Stakes

Once your tree has been in the ground for one year, shake the trunk. If the root ball does not move, it is time to remove all staking materials. Do not let the materials cut into the bark, as this can damage the tree!

If the root ball is still moving, leave the staking materials in place, but loosen all ties or guy wires as needed to prevent damage to branches and the trunk, and to encourage more growth during spring and summer.



February
LANDSCAPE
MAINTENANCE

- Set irrigation system to recommended settings
- Add organic matter to beds
- Cut back ornamental grasses
- Rejuvenate prune shrubs

For more tips, follow us!
@dormoynconsulting

The graphic features a dark green background with white text. A circular inset shows a pair of scissors cutting through green grass. The background of the entire graphic is a field of golden-brown grass.

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