



March 2025 Landscape Management Update



Mountain Park Ranch



Maintenance:

- General blowing and raking of the granite will be the focus through the next service cycles.
- Watering has been maintained at 4 times per week in most turf locations after the increase in Day Time Temperatures.
- **WOW!** This year's turf is looking amazing: after an odd fall winter weather pattern the overseeded turf has filled in nicely and is looking amazing. See page #2.
- Wash maintenance is and will be continued in preparation for summer rains , Pages #3.
- SLM practice updates, this process will continue through March into early April. Pages #4,5 & 6.
- **Looking ahead:**
- Completion of the SLM for all plants and monitoring the water increases for all turf as we heat up for the Spring



Homes: 6000 - Plus Commercial Locations
Residents: Over 20,000
Granite: 35 acres
Turf: 17 acres
Trees: 2667
Irrigation Controllers: 63
Irrigation Valves: 784
Sprinkler Heads: 1,460
Backflows: 63
Value of Common Area Landscape **\$18,530,000**



The turf is starting to really “POP” with a warmer than usual Winter



This month's wash cleanings / continued





Mountain Park Ranch

SLM: Sustainable Landscape Management

The process has started and will continue through March – mid April for Sustainable Landscape Management “SLM” practice for proper plant healthcare

With the cool season upon us, We will begin cutbacks on the Birds of Paradise, Sage and Oleander. This pruning method is recommended by the Arizona Landscape Contractors Association as the preferred pruning practice for professional landscape contractors.

Repeated, long-term shearing of flowering shrubs should not be done for many reasons, including:

- It removes the flower buds, severely curtailing the number of flowers that bloom.
- Causes the shrub to constantly work to replace the leaves that were removed, which causes stress to the shrub and ultimately shortens its life.
- Increases the maintenance required because of frequent pruning and cleanup of the hard-to-reach debris that collects at the base of the shrub, which means more material is hauled off to the landfill.
- Over time, repeated shearing causes branches to die off due to lack of sunlight reaching the interior of the shrub. This causes the shrubs to become very woody and have no new interior growth.
- The shrubs requires more water because they are constantly having to regrow what was removed.
- And lastly, creates a generic looking ‘blob’ in the landscape where a beautifully shaped and flowering shrub should be.

Seasonal cutbacks are very beneficial for several reasons, including:

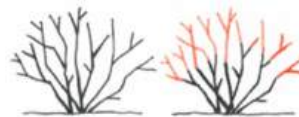
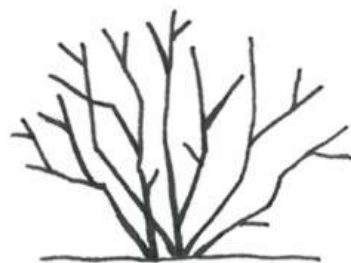
- Promotes healthy growth: regular pruning and cutting back can help stimulate new growth and maintain the plant's overall health.
- Control size: certain plants can grow quite large if left unpruned, so cutting them back helps control the size and prevent them from becoming too large for their space.
- Remove dead or diseased growth: cutting back helps eliminate dead or diseased branches, which can improve the plant's vitality and appearance.
- Enhance flowering: pruning can encourage more prolific flowering by removing old, spent blooms and encouraging the development of new ones.
- Thinning out: reducing the density of the plant by cutting back can improve air circulation and reduce the risk of fungal diseases.
- Decreased water usage and trips to the landfill.
- Increases the amount of time spent in our communities focusing on detail tasks.

<https://extension.arizona.edu/sites/extension.arizona.edu/files/pubs/az1499-2016.pdf>

<https://wateruseitwisely.com/blog/problems-caused-pruning-avoid-2/>

<https://www.azlca.com/blog/landscaping-tips-hard-pruning-shrubs>

<https://www.phoenix.gov/waterservicessite/Documents/Pruning%20Shrubs.pdf>



Remove 1/2 or 2/3 plant height



Thin 1/3 of oldest branches

Rejuvenation Cutbacks

Rejuvenation cutback is a renewal pruning practice that involves the reduction in the plant's size to 12-18".

Why do we do a rejuvenation cutback?

When a plant continuously gets shear pruned year after year they become very woody within the plant and outgrow their intended space. (See figure 1)



(Figure 1)

The outer growth of sheared plants (such as in Figure 1) creates a barrier that prevents light and air from penetrating. This in turn causes the inner growth to stop producing leaves and begin to die. The inner dead wood is weak and can be an entry point for insects and diseases that may be the cause to the plant's demise. The shearing pruning practice also requires more maintenance and lowers the aesthetic value of the plant by continuously removing the outer growth and flowering capability.



(Figure 2)

Rejuvenation cutbacks began mid-winter to early spring when the temperatures are still cooler. (See figure 2) Once the cutback is completed we will be increasing the water to the plants for a few weeks to give the plants adequate water and nutrients. The dramatic cutback will encourage the remaining limbs to promote new, vigorous growth, and improve the aesthetic value of a landscape with a more natural flowering plant cycle throughout the year. (See figure 3 and 4)



(Figure 3: 30-60 days)



(Figure 4)



