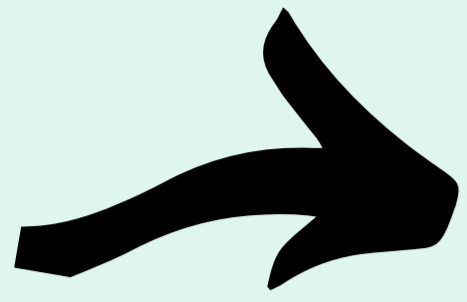


# YEAR ROUND GARDENING

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## **WINTER WATERING IS ESSENTIAL FOR HEALTHY TREES AND TURF NEXT YEAR**

With the growing season over for another year, you may be looking forward to a break from gardening tasks. However, it is important to plan now how you will water your turf, trees and shrubs throughout the winter in the event of low snowfall amounts.

Once plants go dormant for the year, it is easy to think they don't need care until spring. That is not always the case, especially in years with low or no moisture. Trees are still transpiring (losing water) throughout the winter months. Winter desiccation occurs when the amount of moisture loss is greater than the amount of moisture available. Evergreen trees and shrubs transpire in dormancy at a higher rate than deciduous trees and shrubs. Often the damage from winter desiccation to evergreens is not visible until early spring, when brown needles appear on the ends of branches. Newly planted deciduous trees and shrubs are always especially vulnerable to drought and need to be watered throughout the winter months with little to no snowfall.

Winter desiccation can occur on turf when the soil is frozen, making water unavailable to plants. It is more problematic on sunny, dry, windy days when air temperatures are below freezing. Newly established lawns, whether seeded or sodded, are especially susceptible to damage, as are areas with south or west exposures as lawns. Turf in warm exposures is prone to late winter mite damage. The exceptions to winter watering turf are buffalo grass and blue grama grass which do not require supplemental moisture (nor do cacti, succulents and very low water plants.)

You will need to monitor weather conditions and water during extended dry periods without snow cover - one to two times per month from November to April. It is most critical to water in March and April when new roots are forming. Wait for a day when the temperature is over 40° F, use hoses to water early in the day for about 30 minutes per area. Be sure to disconnect the hose and roll it up to drain it to prevent freeze damage, leaving it ready to use the next time it's needed.

More details on winter watering are available at: <https://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/yard-garden/fall-and-winter-watering-7-211/>

If you have gardening questions, please submit them to our email: [Csumg2@elpasoco.com](mailto:Csumg2@elpasoco.com).

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