



LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE

Congratulations on the purchase of your new landscape project! Many of our clients choose to hire a landscape maintenance company to perform their weekly/monthly maintenance. It may be difficult to find a high-quality maintenance company that truly understands the long-term requirements necessary to keep your project looking its best for years to come. We feel it is very important to educate yourself on the care of your landscape. If you understand how to maintain the different facets of your project, you will be able to provide direction to any maintenance company, thus guaranteeing longevity of your project. This packet includes information to help keep your landscape healthy, as well as vital maintenance information on some of the products and features that Unique installs.

LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE (OVERALL)

Twice A Week

- ❖ Visual check of your plants/trees/grass/etc. (overall check for dead/dry plants/leaks/etc.)
- ❖ Visual check (at night) of your low voltage lighting system (overall check of operation & lamps)
- ❖ Visual check of your pool (checking for leaks/wet areas/etc)

Once a Week

The following is usually what you should expect from a GOOD landscape maintenance company.

- ❖ Lawn & Sod maintenance – lawns should be mowed & trimmed at least once a week. Waiting longer can cause too much to be cut off during a mowing – which is bad for the lawn.
- ❖ Blow / Sweep / Rake – an overall cleaning of leaves & debris that accumulates each week within landscape rock/plants/etc.
- ❖ Irrigation Inspection – visual check for any obvious signs of dead/dry/dying plants

Monthly

- ❖ Irrigation timer check – visually check and maintain proper irrigation watering times for proper season.
- ❖ Prune up low growth on trees & around trunk/low branches.
- ❖ Lighting system check – check and replace any lamp/bulbs that are not working.
- ❖ Irrigation – visual inspection of system during operation. A monthly check of all aspects of the irrigation system can help protect damage from failure, clogged emitters, etc.
- ❖ Fertilization – monthly & quarterly fertilization is recommended for sod, plants/trees, flowers, etc.

IRRIGATION & WATERING SYSTEM

Understanding your irrigation system, controller & schedules can be one of your best investments in learning to take care of your landscape investment. Many of our projects, we install new timers, valves & lines, but not always. For operation instruction of our irrigation controllers (Hunter Pro C Controllers), you can visit our website (and look for irrigation).

After new plants & trees are installed, our crews will set the irrigation system for lots of water (especially in the summer!) These newly installed plants/trees & turf grass require their roots to be moist for the first 30 to 60 days. After that, too much water can actually be VERY bad for the health of your landscape. Follow our guidelines & reminders for maintaining proper watering for the season. Visit our website to learn about our “Theory Behind Proper Watering”. Basic rule of thumb is to water less frequently, with longer run times. See attached irrigations schedule for proper run times for each season. Remember, not every project is the same, which is why we use a range of water times.

IRRIGATION MAINTENANCE & TROUBLESHOOTING

How do I turn off my water / irrigation system if there is a problem or major leak?

- On nearly every project we work on, there is a master irrigation valve that is located near the front of the house (or location where your main water supply enters your home).
- At this location (or point of connection for your irrigation system), you will find a backflow prevention device with 2 shutoff handles (the new ones we install are BLUE, but you may have something existing).
- Either of these shutoff valves should completely stop any water from going to your irrigation system – until we can help you assess the problem.

How often do I need to inspect my irrigation system?

- There are many parts that go into an irrigation system, and the operation of this system is critical for your landscape investment. We recommend a QUICK weekly visual inspection, and a monthly thorough inspection. This inspection should just make sure everything is working properly, and plants/trees/grass are getting water. Drip emitters can clog, grass sprayers can get out of adjustment, etc – these are all NON-WARRANTY items that need to be checked on now and then.

My plants are looking bad, so I was told to water them more?

- Did you know, most of the plant replacements we do are from clients that OVER-WATER? Too often than not, we revisit our clients a few months later, and find the same watering schedule for which we initially set. This can be too much water, and actually causes plants & their roots to rot. There is a healthy balance of watering – which is why you should follow our guidelines, and stick to our schedules for each season
- **INDICATORS OF TOO LITTLE WATER**
 - Wilting and curling of the leaves of the plant
 - Dying back of the smaller branches
 - Edges of the leaves may appear burnt.
- **INDICATORS OF TOO MUCH WATER**
 - Ground remains wet
 - Growth is inhibited and the leaves turn a yellow color
 - In some cases, leaves may appear to be dried out
 - Too much water damages the roots by removing oxygen from the soil and can cause root rot

FERTILIZATION GUIDELINES

Unique recommends a good fertilization schedule for your plants/trees & lawn – but there are too many variables to list them all. Here are some general rules for some of our most popular plants/trees.

Cactus – Cacti that are grown in pots from the nursery need minimal irrigation. Cacti that come from the nursery with roots exposed do not need irrigation after the initial few months. Cacti need good drainage away from the roots and require minimal to NO fertilization.

Citrus Trees - Do not fertilize Citrus trees for the first year. After one year, apply ammonium sulfate 3 to 4 times per year (Feb, May & Aug.), following manufacturers recommendations.

Desert Trees – Desert trees are native to this area and require minimal fertilization. Drip emitters will be close to the root ball of the tree when initially planted, but this needs to be slowly pulled back away from the tree to allow for root expansion over time. As the tree matures, the drip emitters should be several feet away from the trunk (approx. half the diameter of the canopy). Most of our projects include double staking of desert trees. These stakes should be left alone for the first year, then slowly loosened, then removed.

Examples of desert trees include:

- All Mesquite Trees
- Texas Ebony
- Palo Verde / Palo Brea
- Ironwood

Non-desert Trees – Non-desert (or tropical / deciduous) trees generally require more water than desert trees with more fertilization. The same guide for pulling back drip emitters should apply. Most of our projects include double staking of desert trees. These stakes should be left alone for the first year, then slowly loosened, then removed.

Examples of non-desert trees:

- Ficus Trees
- Ash / Elm Trees
- Palms

Ocotillos – This type of cactus requires no water and takes up to a year to produce any signs of life. During the first month, hose down the arms three times a week (allowing the ocotillo to soak in the moisture). This moisture will stimulate green and flowering growth on the arms/branches. Generally, the arms are tied up during the first 30 to 60 days after planting. Keeping the arms tied allows the plants roots to establish. This can be removed after 60 days.