

# WICKENBURG LANDSCAPE & IRRIGATION, INC.

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## Those Majestic Plants ... Palms

Palm trees are those majestic plants that we plant around our houses to remind us of the tropics. For such a graceful plant most people have very little knowledge of how palm trees grow or how to take care of them. First, palm trees are in the grass family. As such we need to treat them more like a shrub than a "tree". Secondly, it is many times cheaper to keep a palm tree healthy than it is to fix a problem with a palm. A typical problem will also take about 12-18 months to fully correct. The biggest problem that occurs with palm trees is that they are pruned up too much. People incorrectly think that if they prune up the fronds more then they will have to prune less frequently. When we learn how a plant grows we understand that plants roots take in minerals and water then transfer that up the plant to the leaves and then the leaves through photosynthesis transform the water and minerals into food.

With this knowledge we know that if we cut off almost all of a plants food source, "leaves" it will quickly throw out a "flush"

## Palm Trees are in the Grass Family

of new ones. This is done very rapidly thus negating the idea of excessive pruning. Once the plant has enough leaves to properly control photosynthesis then the plant starts putting out leaves at a normal rate. Continual drastic pruning of palms this way depletes the starch levels in the main stalk and weakens the immune system of the palm. National pruning standards state that a palm tree shall not be pruned up past horizontal during normal pruning. When palm trees are pruned and feed properly they

grow at a slower rate and the fronds remain greener and fuller while the webbing on the fronds grows stronger. Fertilizing of palms should begin in mid spring and repeated 4 times every 8 weeks. It is important to use a palm specific fertilizer since it

contains micronutrients that are uniquely

needed by palms. Typically this fertilizer is a granular that is worked into the soil and then hand watered in. If you are using

an "all purpose" fertilizer through an automatic injector unit then we would only use 1/2 -3/4 the recommended amount.

Following these guidelines will help ensure that the time and effort we spend on our palms will reward us with the unique beauty that only a palm tree can deliver.



## Upcoming Events

Certified Landscaper Training 7/9 and 8/6

Safety / Employee Luncheon 7/15