

Arctic Cold Predicted!

Texas expects another one of those arctic cold fronts this week! Temperatures below freezing for a 36 to 48-hour period are forecasted, and these temperatures can damage tender plants that have not acclimated to this brutal cold. The best protection for these plants is to keep them from being dry going into this weather.

Recent rains may not have supplied adequate water. Provide extra water to all trees, shrubs, ground cover, vines, perennials, ornamental grasses, annual color, and turf (lawns). Additional watering is especially needed on all new plantings since they have a limited root system before cold weather arrives. All plants still use water in the winter. **Hydrated plants survive cold weather better because they have frost protection.** Water releases heat slower than plant tissue protecting plants from the cold. Moisture in the soil also traps heat and gives off heat to plants so they can stay warmer for a few days. This simple task can make a difference in plant survival.

Water early and do not water after the cold arrives. **Make sure irrigation systems are off during freezing weather!**

Over this 36-48 hour period, you can also cover plants for extra protection. Use a fabric material, not plastic, if possible or affordable. Remove materials immediately once temperatures warm back up to prevent disease.

