

## End of Year Updates

2017 was another busy year for the EC Team. While we continued to grow, and while retaining our long-standing clients, we relaunched our Construction Services Division; implementing several turf renovation projects. We also reinforced our infrastructure and maintenance fleet with the addition of a new tree trimming truck and additional maintenance equipment to accommodate our client's needs. Educating the public through informational resources remain in the forefront of what separates EC from other companies. To that end, we will continue to provide detailed monthly maintenance reporting and are proud to announce the launching of a directory to all of our landscape maintenance related periodicals through an Article Index link on our News webpage at [www.eclmi.com](http://www.eclmi.com).

Our greatest blessing this year came with the welcoming of two beautiful little girls into the EC family – below Haley and Ty Jaglowski holding their twin girls, born September 2<sup>nd</sup>. Both Haley and Ty have each worked with EC for over 10 years and are loving being parents.



Congratulation Haley and Ty!



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## HARD PRUNING SHRUBS FOR WINTER

People often ask us why we cut back selected plant materials and ornamental grasses at the end of the growing season. Many of these plants follow a natural course of going dormant in the fall or winter, losing their visual appeal, making it the ideal time to prune. In general, the benefits of pruning include: removal of dead plant material; promoting plant growth; encouraging flower development; maintaining the plant's health and size; and improving its aesthetic appearance.

Hard pruning, also referred to as renovation or rejuvenation pruning, is the process of cutting back shrubs' branches, stems, and flower stocks down to between 2" to 6" above ground level. This method works best for shrubs that consist of several stems or branches arising directly out of the ground. Lightly pruning young shrubs will also help them to grow fuller. Vigorous growing shrubs, such as sages and ornamental grasses, respond best by leaving them at a taller height.

Pruning, especially hard pruning, should be carried out in the fall and winter months for deciduous plants, and in early spring for evergreens.

It is customary to hard prune plants such as Roses, Daylilies, ornamental grasses, and Society Garlic. Hard pruning deciduous sages and the hardy Moraea every 2-3 years rejuvenates growth and helps to maintain the plant's size and shape, while removing accumulated dead plant material. The plants will rebound and produce new shoots in the spring.

Not all plants tolerate hard pruning, so it is best to do your homework before you proceed. Knowing the growth and shape pattern of the shrub will help you to determine how and when to prune. In some cases, it is better not to prune rather than do it incorrectly. For more information regarding hard pruning contact your local nursery or garden center.



## Winter Weather Forecast

Last winter we had significant rainfall, which helped to end California's five-year drought conditions and provided a significant amount of snow to the Sierra Nevada areas. Thus far, rain hasn't been in our forecast and we are experiencing warmer temperatures than we have had in past years. The lack of rain and corresponding snow in the Sierra Nevada has literally a trickle-down effect as this is a significant source of water for California for the upcoming summer (30% of Southern California's water comes from the State Water Project).



These conditions provide a challenge in managing the association's water allocations as many water districts reduce water budgets based on lower temperatures, yet without rainfall and high wind conditions, we have a double impact that greatly reduce the moisture levels. Implementing low water use, drip irrigation and California Friendly plant material are great options.

## LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION Getting to the Root of the Problem

Trees offer a lifetime of beauty as well as environmental, social, and economic benefits. However, deciding which tree to plant and choosing the proper location for the tree can be challenging. You do not have to be a tree expert, but it does require basic knowledge of a tree's features and properties. The Sunset Western Garden Book and searching the Internet are excellent resources for information regarding a tree's growth patterns, its height, and canopy size at full maturity – valuable information when determining which tree to choose and the appropriate location that would work best for that tree.

All trees differ in terms of need for space. Identifying how a tree will be impacted by its surroundings is important. Before you plant the tree, be sure to check the size of its canopy at maturity. It is also necessary to find out about the characteristics of its root system to determine whether the tree you have selected has a history of aggressive or invasive root issues. Although the extent of a tree's root system often matches its canopy size, roots can grow beyond the tree canopy and cause damage to permanent features such as walls, hardscape, and utilities. Tree roots and branches can also extend beyond property lines and impact neighboring properties.



Root damage to sidewalks and pathways is a common occurrence as trees extend their roots out in search of water. There are a few options available to avoid these types of problems. The most common practice is to locate the tree a minimum of 10 feet away from all concrete surfaces (sidewalks and patios), structures (walls and buildings), and utilities (water, sewer, natural gas lines, etc.). Trees with invasive or aggressive root systems, and trees with large canopies, may require 20 to 50 feet of distance from property lines, buildings, and other permanent fixtures. If providing the needed distance or separation is not possible, you might want to reconsider your tree selection or choice of location.

Choosing the right tree and planting it in the appropriate location are key factors to the long-term success and survival of your tree selection.

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