

FS COMMERCIAL LANDSCAPE, INC.

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JANUARY NEWSLETTER

Gardening in Minnesota in January has got to be pretty boring – not much to do but sharpen tools, and plan, plan, plan, and then plan some more. That is why I live and work in California. There are some nice folks in Minnesota, don't get me wrong, and they probably know more about green house growing than I do, but I'm an outdoorsy person and temperatures have to be above freezing for me to be happy. So, what do we do in California in January?

Prune roses, prune trees, spray for cold weather weeds. Let's see,... we also go through your sprinkler system, top to bottom, to be ready for the blistering heat of summer. We re-engineer your sprinklers now so you're not wasting water in the summer. Every controller should have an irrigation map with zones numbered and times written down. Why? Several reasons.

If you spot an irrigation problem you do not want to turn on every station looking for the valve that runs the broken pipe or head. This is sometimes called suicide – sorry, no! It's a game called "let's get all the beautifully washed cars wet" and the purpose is of course to see...

**WHO'LL
SCREAM
THE
LOUDEST?**

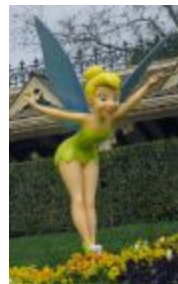
A car wash can cost much more than a broken sprinkler head repair, take it from me. However, if you like verbal abuse (here I'm speaking to our sprinkler men), be my guest – at someone else's landscaping company! Who likes irate customers?! Certainly not us!

Summer is difficult in the sprinkler business. All it takes is one clogged nozzle or broken head and 250 square feet of lawn will turn brown in a week. So every minute counts. You don't want to be playing Russian roulette with the cars again as you look for the station that controls that area, so that is why the sprinkler map is so important.

Some areas, like shrubs & groundcover, don't look like they have a sprinklers problem until summer because they are drought tolerant, the temperatures are cooler and we may get some rain. Then, all of a sudden, in July, you see whole areas turning brown because of a broken wire, valve or pipe. We are in the business of conserving water, not running around like a chicken with its head cut off, trying to save plants that look like they've just crossed the Sahara Desert with Laurence of

Arabia. I know I'm dating myself with this comparison, but for the younger folk, you can consider this a Turner Classic movie recommendation.

What else do we do in winter (if you still insist on calling it that)? Hmm... We clean catch basins and clogged down spouts. However, if you like to look at water stains on your ceilings, by all means, make a kiddie pool of your roof. This is also good reason to keep trees from overhanging a roof. Leaves can really accumulate up there



I know we would all like our properties to look like Disneyland, but if you think raking leaves off your roof will happen, you're spending a little too much time in fantasy land.

You don't need to be a genius to be a gardener, but if you are, gardening is good therapy. What you do need to be is consistent. You need to do things at the right time, communicate to your customers and enjoy being outside. And, oh yeah! You need to have an excellent team like we do at FS Commercial Landscape, Inc.

**CAN YOU
CALL 79° IN
JANUARY
WINTER?**