

## Landscaping In Extreme Summer Heat

Planting and transplanting during the dog days of summer is not an ideal activity, but with a few tips on how to beat the heat and with a little extra care to your plants, you can grow whatever you want this time of year — without getting carried away. Remember to work according to the specific species you are trying to plant or protect.

As with most yard projects, you need to plan ahead. Watch your local weather to plan your gardening. Try landscaping on an overcast day or perhaps just after it has finished raining. Your plants won't have to compete with the scorching sun to absorb water. Are your town's water-use restrictions preventing you from feeding your landscape as much as you need? You should consider installing an irrigation well as a backup water source.

Make sure you water any new plants or transplants thoroughly this time of year. The best way to water in extreme heat is with a drip system. Over-head watering, such as sprinklers, tend to allow the water to evaporate in extreme heat, therefore leaving your plants without the vital water they need to survive these blazing temperatures. If you do use sprinklers, avoid watering during the hottest part of the day. Try setting them to run automatically during the cooler morning or evening temperatures.

Keeping your grass's length longer than normal this time of year can help keep the surface soil cool. Keeping your beds mulched will do the same for your plant's root system. This practice can help some plants cope with extreme temperatures, so they don't suffer from heat shock. Dried grass also works great as a "mulch" in this circumstance. Mulch will also help keep away weeds that would otherwise take away from your plant's ability to absorb water and nutrients.

*Paul Doherty*

*President | D&D Mulch and Landscape, Inc.*

