

Planting Tips: The Scoop on Soil

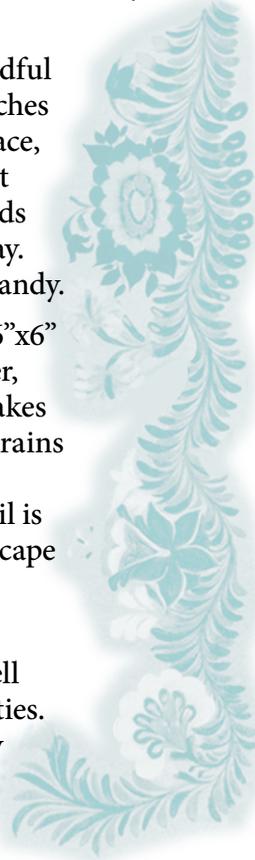
One of the keys to a successful landscape is selecting plants that are suited to the prevailing site conditions – particularly soil conditions. Soil holds water and nutrients and provides structure for root growth and anchorage. Soils may vary from site to site and also within a single location. It is much easier to choose plants that are adapted to the existing soil than to try and alter the soil to suit a plant!

What kinds of soil conditions exist on your property? For a quick reference, try these easy “tests”:

1) Texture. Take a handful of soil from a few inches below the ground surface, wet it, and squeeze. If it forms a clump and holds together, it contains clay. If it won't clump, it is sandy.

2) Percolation. Dig a 6”x6” hole, fill it with water, and time how long it takes to drain. Repeat. If it drains as quickly the second time as the first, the soil is suitable for most landscape plants.

3) Observation. Note what plants grow well in neighboring properties. Those plants will likely grow well on your property, too.



Your Water Connection

News & Tips for Tucson Water Customers

March 2009

www.tucsonaz.gov/water

On The Water Front It's the Economy...



By now most of you have heard or read about the steps Tucson Water is taking to address the unprecedented revenue shortfall the utility is experiencing. I want to explain in more detail how we got into this situation, and what we're doing to meet these challenges.

Tucson Water is an 'enterprise fund' of the City, meaning that we must operate similarly to a private business generating revenues to cover the cost of operations. Each year Tucson Water budgeting staff works with the Citizens' Water Advisory Committee (CWAC) and the Mayor and Council to develop a financial plan that projects the utility's needs for the coming fiscal year, and determine how much revenue we could expect. In 2008, our region had already begun to experience the slowdown related to the spiraling economy. In response, our financial plan and budget for the current fiscal year were very conservative.

However, the economic deterioration affecting the Tucson region and the country has reached unprecedented levels, virtually halting new construction, increasing the number of vacant residences, and reducing water consumption. The reduction in water use is far beyond what we've historically seen in response to calls for conservation. (In fact, our community is using less water than we did a year ago.) All of these factors have resulted in a projected revenue shortfall of approximately \$15 million.

Some customers have contacted us with the concern that Tucson Water will be raising rates to make up for the revenue shortfall. We are doing all we can to avoid additional increases over what was already projected in our five-year financial plan. Tucson Water is taking these specific steps to attack the revenue decline:

♦ **Holding the line on personnel costs.** Nearly 80 job positions at Tucson Water will go unfilled. This means that many

On the Water Front continued inside

Have a question for Water 101 or a suggestion for a topic?
Call us at 791-4331 or e-mail to TW_Web1@ci.tucson.az.us

YOUR UTILITIES

Pima County –

Regional Optimization Plan to Reduce Pollution

The Regional Optimization Master Plan (ROMP) is a plan that Pima County Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department (RWRD) is under a mandate to complete by 2015. This plan will result in the reduction of ammonia and nitrogen levels in treated wastewater that is discharged into the Santa Cruz River. Some treated wastewater (effluent) eventually reaches our groundwater.

There are three parts to the ROMP:

- 1) Upgrading and expanding the Ina Road Wastewater Reclamation Facility (WRF) which will result in the reduction of nitrogen and ammonia levels,
- 2) Constructing a new wastewater treatment facility near the existing Roger Road facility followed by the decommissioning (and eventual demolition) of the Roger Road facility, and
- 3) Constructing a large sewer line between the Roger Road WRF and the Ina Road WRF.

The mandate to accomplish these activities comes from the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ). ADEQ is basing these mandates on water quality standards required by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. In light of the difficult economy, some in our community feel the timing for such a program is regrettable. Nonetheless, RWRD has no choice but to move forward with this regulatory-imposed program; failure to meet its deadlines could result in regulatory actions, including large fines and the continued requirement to complete all components of the ROMP.

RWRD is committed to completing this program which will improve effluent quality, enhance the ecosystem of the Santa Cruz River, protect the quality of the underlying groundwater, and avoid costly fines and penalties.

The Pima County Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department (PCRWRD) –
For more information about the regional wastewater system, call (520) 740-6500 or visit www.pima.gov/wwm.

City of Tucson

Environmental Services –

Los Reales Landfill Update

Once a week a City garbage truck picks up your trash and takes it to the Los Reales Landfill – the only active landfill owned and operated by the City of Tucson. With more than 1000 acres, the Los Reales Landfill has capacity for the Tucson-area for the next 50 years. The Landfill is a critical component of Environmental Services' long term waste management plan.

In 2007, a master plan for Los Reales was approved by the Mayor and City Council. Currently underway is the design of new entrance facilities along with the realignment of Los Reales Road. The new entrance facilities will make access easier and hauling more convenient for commercial and self-haulers. In addition, the new drop-off areas will offer residents quick and expanded opportunities to recycle and divert materials that might be harmful to our environment.

February 2, 2009 marked the opening of a new lined waste storage area or cell at Los Reales Landfill. Cell 3, approximately 29 acres in area and 100-foot deep, is located along the northeast boundary of the Landfill site. A total of seven cells are planned for Los Reales Landfill. Cell 3 adds nine years of waste storage capacity to Los Reales Landfill.

Cell 3 boasts state of the art design features that prevent potential landfill contaminants from reaching the groundwater: three layers of High Density Polyethylene (HDPE) liners; a leachate (liquid) collection and recovery gravel drain field and pump system, and slope protection. To find out more about the Los Reales Landfill expansion, go to www.tucsonaz.gov/esd/Landfill/landfill.html. **Los Reales Landfill** – Open to commercial & self-haulers 5300 E. Los Reales Road (South on Craycroft Rd., off I-10)

Monday-Friday,
6:00 am–5:00 pm
Saturday,
7:00 am–5:00 pm
Closed Sundays

Environmental Services –

To ask questions or learn more about recycling, call (520) 791-5000 or visit www.tucsonaz.gov/esd or www.tucsonrecycles.org.

Sign Up for Spring-Summer WaterSmart Classes

Each year hundreds of homeowners attend WaterSmart classes taught by local experts through the University of Arizona Pima County Cooperative Extension and sponsored by Tucson Water. Classes are free and seating is limited, so advance registration is strongly recommended. To register or for more info, contact Kathryn or Teri at (520) 626-5161. On the web, WaterSmart can be found at http://cals.arizona.edu/pima/smartscape/workshop_water.html

All classes are taught at *Pima County Cooperative Extension, 4210 N. Campbell Avenue* in Tucson.

**March 25 (Wednesday) –
Landscape Water Budgeting** 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon

**April 4 (Saturday) –
Hands-On Drip Irrigation
Irrigation Controllers** 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**April 25 (Saturday) –
Basic Landscape Maintenance** 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

**April 29 (Wednesday) –
Desert Rain Gardens
Harvesting Rainwater for
Landscape Use** 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
12:00 noon – 2:00 p.m.

**May 2 (Saturday)–
Hands-On Drip Irrigation
Irrigation Controllers** 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**May 9 (Saturday)–
Basic Landscape Maintenance** 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

**May 30 (Saturday)–
Desert Rain Gardens
Harvesting Rainwater for
Landscape Use** 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
12:00 noon – 2:00 p.m.

**June 6 (Saturday) –
Hands-On Drip Irrigation
Irrigation Controllers** 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**June 10 (Wednesday) –
Basic Landscape Maintenance** 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

**June 20 (Saturday) –
Landscape Water Budgeting
Principles of Xeriscape** 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

On The Water Front

On the Water Front continued from front

employees are doing a lot more work in order to assure you of the best service possible, while saving money. It also means that it may take longer to answer your phone calls, address slow leaks in the water system, or do the many behind-the-scenes activities that help us run efficiently.

◆ **Reducing our purchase of Central Arizona Project (CAP) water** for the first time in many years. It was our hope to import our entire 47 billion gallon allocation of Colorado River water in 2009. We simply cannot afford to meet that goal in this economy. Instead, Tucson Water is planning to purchase about 31 billion gallons in fiscal 2009 and 2010. We hope that by 2012, we'll again be able to use our full allocation.

These steps should allow us to address the shortfall for fiscal 2009. As we develop our budget for 2010, we'll be even more conservative and assume that the conditions we're facing this year will persist. Tough budgeting and operational challenges will continue to face all of us until we see our local and national economy begin to recover.

You can be assured that providing you with top quality water and service will continue to be our guiding principles. Also, we'll be watching every penny of your investment to ensure that our activities and projects are as cost-efficient as possible. As we work together to meet the extraordinary challenges ahead, we welcome any ideas or suggestions you might have, and stand ready to answer your questions.

Jeff Biggs, Director, Tucson Water

Clearwater Quality Report

Most recent water quality data

(Jan. 9– Feb. 5, 2009)

67	Sodium (mg/L) (Feb. 4)
437.4	Mineral (mg/L) (Jan. 8 – Feb. 5 avg.)
239	Hardness (mg/L) (Feb. 4)
7.96	pH (S.U.) (Jan. 8 – Feb. 5 avg.)
Neg	Coliform Bacteria (Jan. 14)
0.88	Chlorine level (mg/L) (Jan. 8 – Feb. 5 avg.)
79.6	Temp (deg F) (Jan. 8 – Feb. 5 avg.)

Visit the Tucson Water web site at www.tucsonaz.gov/water

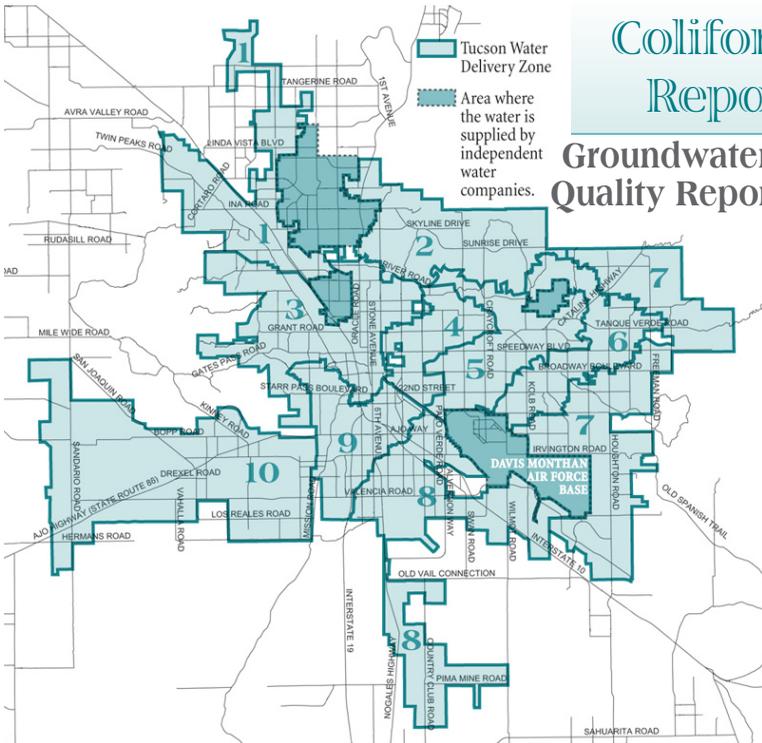
Your Water Connection is produced by Tucson Water. To receive a copy, or to receive this information in Spanish, call 791-4331 or mail your request to: Tucson Water, Customer Information, P.O. Box 27210, Tucson, AZ 85726-7210. City of Tucson TTY number: 791-2639

Si usted desea este documento escrito en español, por favor llame al 791-4331.



Groundwater Quality Report - January 2009

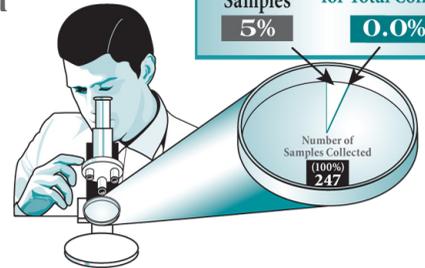
Water Quality Zone		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	System Wide
Sodium (mg/L)*	Average	50	65	60	65	60	58	65	58	57	50	60
49 SAMPLING POINTS	Range	50-50	58-68	56-66	56-68	49-67	47-67	64-66	41-68	43-68	43-58	41-68
Mineral Content (mg/L)*	Average	402	491	430	495	449	474	439	463	430	314	447
247 SAMPLING POINTS	Range	270-475	460-517	211-499	458-523	172-522	329-521	230-508	342-523	207-566	223-500	172-566
Hardness (mg/L)*	Average	194	226	201	227	206	202	227	212	179	126	204
49 SAMPLING POINTS	Range	194-194	201-241	182-236	187-240	163-237	168-232	221-232	175-234	89-241	87-178	87-241
pH (S.U.)	Average	8.0	8.0	8.1	8.0	7.9	8.0	8.0	7.9	7.8	7.9	8.0
247 SAMPLING POINTS	Range	7.5-8.1	7.9-8.2	7.9-8.2	7.8-8.0	7.2-8.1	7.2-8.2	7.5-8.2	7.7-8.0	7.5-8.0	7.8-8.1	7.2-8.2
Temperature (deg F)	Average	70	71	70	72	71	70	69	69	70	68	70
247 SAMPLING POINTS	Range	63-75	64-77	63-75	65-77	62-80	62-77	64-76	61-76	59-74	63-78	59-80



Coliform Bacteria Testing Report - January 2009

Groundwater Quality Report COLIFORM

EPA Standard for Positive Samples	Number of Positive Samples for Total Coliform
5%	0.0%

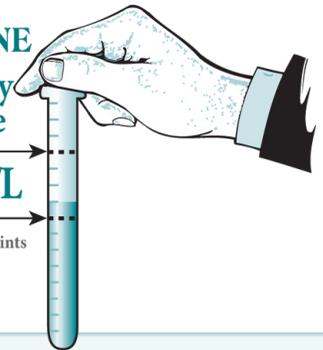


CHLORINE Monthly Average

Target = 0.8 to 1.2 mg/L

0.9 mg/L

247 Sample Points



* mg/L means milligrams per liter; 1 mg/L = 1 teaspoon in 1,302 gallons

** 17.1 milligrams per liter (mg/L) = 1 grain per gallon; Therefore, the system-wide hardness average as reported for January 2009: 204 mg/L divided by 17.1 = 11.93 grains per gallon.

To give you a more accurate measurement of the water quality in your neighborhood, the Tucson Water service area has been divided into 10 zones based on differences in water pressure and water quality. For a detailed description of the zone boundaries, call 791-4331.

With the exception of chlorine and coliform bacteria, none of the water quality parameters reported here have U.S. Environmental Protection Agency primary standards set for them. For more information about primary and secondary water quality standards, visit Tucson Water's Web site at www.tucsonaz.gov/water.