



Home Inspection Services Newsletter

November 1, 2006

Educational Section: **Yard Watering**

As an option, H&A Services inspects sprinkler and drip systems for **system functionality and visual water leaks only**. The following are items which not related to the system inspection but regularly observed:

Wasted Water:

Some systems are still set on the summer watering schedule

Large desert trees being watered: They don't need water in the desert. Talk to your nursery first about how to wean them.

Mature trees and shrubs that are watered at their bases (watering should be at the plants drip line).

Sprinkler heads that overspray onto walls, houses, sidewalks, etc.

Inadequate number of zones: Means that some plants are over watered or some are under watered.

Sub-optimal watering:

Undersize drips: ¼ gallon/hour for 8 minutes (that's not much water).

Drips in the wrong locations: Drips at shrub base which was proper when the shrub was small but the plants drip line is now 5 ft from base.

Sprinklers that do not overlap: Creates dry patches in the lawn.

Partially clogged heads: All systems need to be occasionally flushed.

Inadequate number of drips: 1 large instead of 3 small at drip line.

Poor cycle times and schedules: Times and cycles should be determined by the ground's ability to absorb water. To get water down 3 feet in hard soils, may take ¼ gallon/hour for 4 hours not 1 gallon/hour for 1 hour. Rule of thumb is to water deeply and less often to promote deeper roots.

Summary: 80% of the systems are set up the way they were installed even though the plantings have matured. Most water providers offer free classes to homeowners on yard watering systems. Even if you rely on a yard service, we strongly urge you to become familiar with your system and improve your knowledge of the best practices. Most yard services do not update or maintain your system (or understand it).

Inspection Item for Nov.: Moisture Inspection

(Each month, we select appropriate items so that over a 12 month period you are reminded to attend to most common household maintenance/inspection items.) A regular inspection of the walls and ceilings in the home for moisture intrusion is critical. We recommend using a **powerful flashlight** with the beam at an angle to examine the edges, corners and ceiling surfaces. Inspect the base of exterior walls and interior walls that are proximate to water fixtures and drains (kitchen, bathrooms, laundry, water softeners, bar sinks, etc.). Look for stains, sagged wallpaper, rippled drywall surfaces, and discolored grout. **Utilize your nose** to detect odors from molds which can result from moist areas.

Question of the Month: What is a tank-less water heater?

As the name implies, this type of water heater produces water on demand and **does not employ a storage tank** (the large unit in the garage). These units are worth consideration on smaller homes and condos assuming that natural gas is present. An article about these heaters is posted on our web site.

Safety Tip of the Month: Arc Fault Circuit Breakers

Did you know that you can add these new electrical safety devices to your existing home? New construction requires arc fault breakers on bedroom circuits for safety. Many electrical contractors feel that changing current bedroom circuit breakers to arc faults is worth the money and if your house is wired with **solid aluminum**, these breakers are definitely recommended.

Drawing for November: Bottle of Red Wine—Mark's Pick

To enter, send a reply email with "November Drawing" in the subject along with your name and Ph# to Lauren@hainspect.com Marianne of Wickenburg was October's winner.

Let our experience work for you. Over 10,000 inspections performed!



Daryl Gates



Mark Andrews



Lauren Andrews

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Lauren, Daryl, and I appreciate your referrals. Thank you.