

Weather watching makes me appreciate living in Florida

I have mentioned in previous articles that I am what I refer to as a weather watcher. It goes with the job of looking after the vast amount of landscape we have in The Villages to better plan the maintenance operations for properties between County Road 42 in Marion County and State Road 44 in Sumter County. I also am a radar watcher.

My daily ritual involves pulling up a couple different weather sites almost every morning. I look at the local weather forecast and radar first, and then the radar for the rest of the nation in order to see possible weather fronts that might be heading our way.

What I have seen recently in the North, especially the north-east portions of the United States, makes me glad that I call this part of Florida home. I much prefer the greens and yellows on the local radar as opposed to the pinks and blues that have been pounding the Midwest and New England. Brrrrr! I can't even imagine trying to get to work in that mess.

With that being said, we have had what I consider a wetter than normal winter in our area, but it also has been warmer than usual as well. At least so far.

Remember, Punxsutawney Phil saw his shadow earlier this month, so according to a groundhog, we still have plenty of time for a hard freeze here to go along with the smattering of light frosts we have received.

Much of the Zoysia turf in open areas has gone fairly dormant and is showing some typical straw coloring from



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the cold, but most of the St. Augustine turf in our area still is green and actively growing. Turf color is another tool I use to judge the amount of cold weather we have had by the impact to the landscaped areas.

Some areas where our maintenance contractors usually can plan to skip a week of mowing this time of the year barely have slowed down and still have to be mowed weekly or they risk leaving clumps from mowing turf when it has gotten too tall. The maintenance contractors are hoping for more cold weather so they can skip a week between mowings and concentrate on other areas.

If we do experience more cold weather, and especially frost on areas of turf, kindly avoid driving or parking an auto or cart on any turf that still has frost on it or you may damage the turf and leave tracks. Please keep this in mind when searching for an early morning place for Phideaux to take care of business, as well.

We are in the process of having the latest round of pine straw mulching applied on all District-maintained properties. With an area of this size with as many nooks and crannies, there are bound to be challenges for both the mulch applicators and for residents who get behind one of the carts getting

the straw bales from point A to point B.

It can be a surprise and frustrating if they have not placed all the cones and signage out yet, so please try and remember they are just doing their job and try and be patient and watch out for them and other vehicles that may not be paying attention.

If you know the area around you has been completed, but maybe they missed your cul-de-sac, kindly give us a call at District Property Management at 753-4022 and let us know the area you think was missed and we will check it out. You also can contact the Customer Service Center at 753-4508 and they will be happy to provide the information to us.

We recently have had to run water at night on some turf areas along Morse and Buena Vista boulevards south of County Road 466 in order to drop the levels in some of our retention basins. We may perform this function again if we continue to receive rain.

When we have cooler daytime temperatures, the need for irrigation to turf and shrubs is much less. The combination of rain and cool temperatures tends to keep some of the basins we utilize for irrigation higher than we like them to be because of decreased demand.

That's all I have this time, but I look forward to meeting you again, here at Our Place.

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