

Fall Plant Trimming

By: Melinda Sperl

The drought caused a lot of plant damage this year and it is confusing, should you trim now or wait until after winter. Knockout Roses, Encore Azaleas, Mums and Camellias are among the few that are set to bloom now and need a good fertilizer to have the energy they need to bloom. Knockouts bloom only on new wood some trimming them now will give you color for the fall.

Most plants need trimming on a regular basis to shape the hedge and to keep its lines clean. The plant type will determine the timing of the trimmings but most shrubs only need trimming once per quarter to twice per year. Never trim a plant weekly. If you have flowering shrubs like azalea, remember to only trim after the bloom cycle or you will lose the coveted flowers.

Over trimming can result in a shrub that is all branches with very little leaves. The solution to this problem is to trim about 1/3 of its current height to encourage new growth. If more trimming is needed, wait at least another month and trim another 1/3 until you achieve a nice full plant. The first trim should only be done during the growing season after last frost. Remember that while you are trimming, the plant will not be the most attractive but with some patience you will have the nice hedge that you desired.

Melinda Sperl is the owner of Dream Landscape Design, Inc., a full service landscape and irrigation company. You can reach Melinda at 281-744-2669 or www.dreamlandscapedesign.com