

Garden Line - April 2011

by Brent Moon - HPARD Urban Garden Manager

The spring garden season has arrived, now that the consistently warm temperatures of April are here. Read on for some things you should be doing in your lawn and garden now:



Garden

- If you haven't already done so, get your tomatoes planted
 - It is now warm enough to plant summer-producers such as peppers, egg plant, yellow squash, zucchini, bush and pole snap beans, melons, sweet corn, cucumber, okra, lima beans
 - Keep your plants well-watered and fertilized to keep them growing vigorously and to produce a bountiful crop
- Keep an eye out for those nasty aphids, cutworms, and spider mites
 - Don't forget that it's never too late to add compost to your garden!

If you do encounter a problem with spider mites or aphids, you can help control them by blasting them with a spray of water. You may also want to treat them with insecticidal soap or wettable sulfur. Heavy infestations of spider mites may call for a miticide.

Landscape

- April is a good time to put a fresh layer of mulch on your landscape before your plants grow too much. Mulch will help reduce weed growth and retain moisture
- Summer-time blooming annuals such as zinnia, vinca, Portulaca, pentas, celosia, and lantana will give some heat-resistant color to your landscape
- If you grow roses, it's time to start keeping an eye out for powder mildew and blackspot. Spray them with neem oil or other fungicide to prevent disease outbreaks
- A light application of fertilizer throughout your landscape will help keep your plants growing vigorously



Lawn

- Now is the time to apply fertilizer to your lawn. Look for something with a 3-1-2 ratio
 - Don't apply too much, since excess fertilizer runs off into the storm drains and ultimately contributes to the dead zone in the Gulf
 - Sod for St. Augustine can be set out now and Bermuda and buffalo grass can be seeded
 - Be sure to keep your lawn well-watered to avoid stress
- Water in deeply (6") so that the entire root zone is thoroughly soaked. Watering too lightly promotes a shallow, weak root system and a lawn that is less able to deal with drought
 - Consider leaving clippings on the lawn, which provides free fertilizer to your grass as the clippings break down