

COLD DAMAGE GARDENING TIPS *from Petersons*

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HOW TO CARE FOR FREEZE DAMAGED TROPICALS - HARDY AND TENDER

The Central Florida area has been subjected to sustained twelve or more hours of extremely low, freezing temperatures with winds causing chill factors of well below zero. It is important that steps be taken to help restore the damage landscape to its natural beauty. We recommend the following action be taken as soon as a killing frost or freeze is over.

FIRST- Maintain adequate water (moisture). This should be done no matter how bad the lawn, trees or shrubs look. The root system may still be in an undamaged condition.

SECOND- Spray a fungicide on damaged plants using a recommended dosage, and one that is **cleared** for use on the specific plants; Thiomy, Daconil 2787 (SA's L.O.V), Dithane M-45, or other. Application should be made three times at recommended dosages found on the label.

IMPORTANT: ALWAYS READ THE LABEL.

THIRD- DO NOT PRUNE OR CUT BACK DAMAGED PORTIONS until danger of frost and freezing is over. Bank up soil around tropical plants that have been damaged to protect them from future cold damage. This could be till mid March.

NOW MAINTAIN UNTIL SPRING by following good horticultural practices. When the danger of cold is over and spring is here, the home owner will have a lot of work to do, but remember – **DON'T BECOME DISCOURAGED!** Many of these plants will recover and grow quickly because of their healthy root systems. This is a major reason for keeping cold damage plants well watered. Several applications with Miracle-Gro, Peters Special or Start, Root and Bloom soluble fertilizer will keep the roots in a healthy growth condition.

SPRING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PLANTS, TREES, SHRUBS AND LAWNS

FIRST – Prune back damaged wood until good, firm, green wood is located. Dead wood will be brown and decayed. Look for new sprouts. You may have to cut back to ground level – if it is necessary, expose the stump below ground level to permit growth from this area.

SECOND – Paint these cuts with pruning paint or white glue.

THIRD – Apply fertilizer when growth appears – at one-half of the recommended amount, then apply the other half about six weeks later.

FOURTH – Maintain adequate water supply and supplement your water with soluble (liquid) fertilizer.

REMEMBER water restrictions still apply, water thoroughly.

* * * * * SPECIAL CASES * * * * *

PALMS – Damage to certain palms may be so extensive that all fronds are dead and the bud fronds slide out. Spray copper fungicide into bud area to prevent fungi and an insecticide, Systemic Insecticide, Merit (Bayer Products) or Orthene, to prevent insects (borers). A 100% organic 6-6-6 fertilizer or Espoma Palm – Tone Fertilizer should be applied also.

CITRUS – If trees were killed to ground level, check to see if tree sprouts are above or below the budded area. If below the budded area, remove and replace the tree. If above the budded area, allow one main trunk to develop and the tree will return to bearing size quickly in a few years.

LAWNS – Maintain adequate water supply. In the spring, cut very close to remove brown stubble and fertilize with a high grade fertilizer such as, Turf Builder 16-2-8. De-thatching removal of dead grass should be done with caution. Weed and Feeds, with exception of crabgrass preventer, should be withheld until grass shows recovery and actively growing and could be till mid March.

ROSES – Damage to roses could be minimal and restricted only to top growth. If canes are undamaged by cold then normal pruning should be done at the recommended time of year. Remember to follow proper pruning procedures using pruning sealants and fungicides. After growth begins, it may be necessary to prune some canes further back because of lower freeze damage.

Any Questions please call us at Peterson Nursery & Garden Center, Inc. 863-644-6491