



Monarch Landscape Management:

Is your lawn suffering from drought stress?

Over the last two years we have been experiencing drought stress on lawns. The last such extended drought occurred in 2011, just over a decade ago. Long periods of no, or low rainfall during extreme heat can lead to drought stress conditions. Without proper watering, these conditions can impact your lawn and landscape, killing grass, many plants and even trees. We will be reviewing examples of limited and severe drought stress and review methods to deal with these issues. We will also review lawn issues or irrigation issues that can be mistaken for drought stress.

What is Drought Stress?

Drought stress happens when the turf grass's water requirement is not met with rainfall or supplemental irrigation. This will cause the grass to go into premature dormancy. The grass will direct its energy to protecting its roots versus new growth. Long bouts of drought stress conditions can lead to decline and or death of turfgrass.

What does drought stress look like?

Drought stress can present itself as isolated or widespread in your lawn area. It can be seen as small patches of decolorization, or it can be seen as more drastic.

Isolated drought stress on a Lawn.



Widespread Drought stress on the lawn.



Most of our soil in the Houston area contains a lot of clay. The soil is slow to absorb water when applied. In many cases a shorter application of water applied multiple times can be done to help in allowing water to percolate into the soil. The soil tends to shrink and expand based on the amount of moisture present. Improper watering can affect a lawn as well as a home's foundation. Over time, with the soil's movement, foundations can move into empty spaces causing foundations to crack. That is why it is important to water at the foundation of a home. Ground cracking may develop in lawns as well. Cracking ground can be addressed after droughts by core aeration. This will allow the soil to better take in water, air, and nutrients for healthier turf.