

## Turn Your Grass into CA\$H

### Good reasons to take out your grass

Would you prefer lower water bills and less yard work to worry about? Do you have an old, tired lawn that seems to require more and more effort to maintain? Is the only time you walk on your lawn when you mow it? Are you interested in a cash rebate of up to \$600? If you answered yes to any of these questions, you may want to consider making the switch to Xeriscape (a colorful, low water use landscape).

**How much water will you save?** The average conversion to a Xeriscape saves about 30% on the total household water bill. Here's how it adds up:

A Bermuda or Bermuda hybrid lawn requires over 55 inches per year (with winter over seeding) and over 40 inches per year (without winter over seeding). The average xeriscape requires less than 18 inches per year. Compare with our average rainfall of 8 inches.

### Before you start – have a good plan

Creating a plan will help you tailor your landscape to meet your needs, your tastes, and your checkbook. It will help you stay focused and help you avoid time consuming and costly mistakes. Need some help in planning your new landscape? Ask your local water conservation office for the free, how-to booklets listed on the back of this brochure.

### Getting rid of the grass

Bermuda grass is an aggressive grass and can be extremely hard to get rid of - one reason it does so well in our desert climate. It has above ground blades and stems as well as stolons (above ground runners), rhizomes (underground runners) and seed. After months of appearing dead Bermuda grass can spring back to life when water is applied. The most effective way to eradicate it is by the careful use of the proper herbicide.

**What to use:** The most effective herbicides for killing Bermuda grass contain the chemical glyphosate. This chemical is sold under the brand names DOOMSDAY, KLEENUP, or ROUNDUP and could be available under other trade names. Glyphosate is not a long-lived or persistent chemical. It is a systemic that is absorbed through the leaves and is **not** effective when applied to the soil.

**When to treat:** June through September is the best time to get rid of Bermuda grass. At this time, the daytime temperatures are above 80 degrees and the grass is growing vigorously, which is necessary for the herbicide to work effectively.

**How to apply:** Before applying glyphosate, fertilize and water the grass as if you want to keep it. The herbicide is only effective when the grass is green and actively growing. Do not scalp or mow the grass.

Choose a windless day and apply the herbicide, carefully mix the spray by following the directions on the container. Spray the leaves and take particular care not to get the spray on any desirable plants. Use cardboard or plastic to shield plants in tight areas. It is best to spray in the early morning hours. Wait 24 hours to resume normal watering.

Allow 10- 14 days for the glyphosate to work. It will take up to two weeks for the lawn to turn brown after which some of the grass may grow back. Begin the process again by thoroughly watering the lawn to see what has not died out. Repeat a second application of glyphosate on the areas where re-growth appears.

Two weeks after the second spraying, scalp the lawn with a mower set very low. If the dead grass is very thick, you may need to use a power rake to thin it out. Take off as much grass as possible.

**Effectiveness:** Within 10 to 14 days after the second spraying, the majority of the grass should be dead. Established Bermuda grass lawns can have very deep root systems. There could be re-sprouting in some areas. Once a month, spot treat any areas where grass returns.

### **Tips**

Turning off the water to your lawn is not a good way to kill the grass. Bermuda lawns can have very deep root systems, which can continue to live for years on rain alone.

Plastic sheeting is not recommended as a method to kill or control the grass. The plastic eventually breaks down and tears leaving the landscape unsightly and difficult to cleanup.

Dedicate a plastic sprayer to be used for your herbicide. Label the container “herbicide only”. For the safety of yourself and those around you, be sure that you read and follow the instructions on the label.

Do not use a soil sterilizer or complete vegetation killer. These chemicals can travel through the soil and kill desirable plants.

Use a water-soluble colorant so you can detect where you have already sprayed. Walk backward while applying herbicide to avoid tracking to unintended areas.

You may need to use a selective herbicide (that kills grass only), if grass is growing close to desirable plants.

Before installing your new landscape, dig out two to four inches of grass and soil next to hardscaped areas (sidewalks, patios, decking, driveways, etc.) to prevent crushed rock or decomposed granite from falling onto patios or walkways.

Using the appropriate adaptors, grass sprinkler systems can be easily converted to drip systems.

### **Alternative methods**

Remember Bermuda grass is invasive and very persistent. Other methods such as solarizing, vinegar sprays, smothering, digging out, tilling or use of sod cutters will have limited success.