

## Dear Monarch,

The landscapers have stopped mowing our turf! They usually mow every week – what happened?

### TURF DORMANCY

Dear Concerned Resident,

Turf needs the most care when it is actively growing (weekly mowing, higher irrigation, fertilization, and other maintenance practices). If you have a warm season grass such as Seashore Paspalum or Bermudagrass, it will go dormant in fall and winter. Expect the turf to turn a golden-brown color and slow down its growth. Mowing may be required every other week or even less!

- To avoid damaging the turf by removing too much material, we employ “skip mowing” or mowing half as often beginning around November. As weather changes, you may notice even less frequent mowing if the grass has completely stopped growing. Since the grass is growing slowly, there simply isn’t a reason to mow more often.
- Turf dormancy is a boon to the landscape since labor can be reallocated towards other seasonal projects. Cutting back ornamental grasses, deep cleaning and pruning, and fall planting are great examples of how to spend your labor in place of mowing.
- Warm season turf begins actively growing again in spring. That rich green color will return when the soil warms up enough to prompt new growth.
- Some communities favor selections like Paspalum because of its salt tolerance. If you are near the ocean or use reclaimed water with a higher salt content, this is an excellent choice.
- Warm season grasses can be over-seeded to appear green through their dormancy, but this loses all the benefits of allowing turf to rest.

#### MONARCH TIP

Did you know? Seashore Paspalum can be used in soil remediation, filtering toxic chemicals from soil and water, creating safer, more sustainable environments.