



NEWSCAPE, LLC

*Create • Install • Maintain*

# *The Standard for Southwest Florida*



WINTER SEASONAL BRIEF

DECEMBER — FEBRUARY • SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

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## *Peak season presentation and cold risk.*

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The property is at its most visible and its most vulnerable in the same twelve weeks. Residents are home, guests are arriving, and a single overnight front can undo a season of color. Winter work is about protecting what is already there.

WHAT THIS SEASON DECIDES

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01

### **Tropical material takes damage well above freezing**

Tropical plants and summer annuals do not harden to withstand freezing, and many suffer chilling injury below 50°F. A sudden drop in late fall or early winter causes more damage than the same low temperature in January or February, because the plants have not acclimated.

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02

### **Water before the front, not during it**

A well-watered soil absorbs more solar radiation than dry soil and re-radiates that heat overnight, slightly elevating minimum temperatures in the plant canopy. In-ground irrigation should then be shut off before temperatures actually reach freezing. Landscape systems cannot maintain the film of water that protects a crop, so running them through a freeze does more harm than good.

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03

### **Do not cut the damage off**

Cold-injured leaves and stems insulate the living tissue behind them. The right approach is to delay pruning, identify injury by scraping the bark and reading the cambium (green is alive, black or brown is not), and cutting behind the point of discoloration once new growth confirms where the live wood ends. Cutting too early removes wood that would have recovered.

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04

### **Watering days tighten in the dry season**

Across Southwest Florida, landscape irrigation is limited to set days and kept out of the heat of the day, and local schedules can tighten further as early as February 1. Rules differ by county and city. Every zone has to be verified before the schedule tightens, not after.





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### COLD PROTECTION · HOW IT IS DONE RIGHT

Water the landscape before the front arrives, so the soil stores heat through the night. Shut in-ground irrigation off before temperatures reach freezing. Leave cold-injured material in place until new growth shows where the live wood ends.

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### HOW NEWSCAPE HANDLES IT

- Cold-event protocol: pre-irrigation, controller shutdown, morning site assessment
- Dry-season irrigation frequency adjustment, zone by zone
- Documented damage assessment before any pruning decision
- Detail-level attention on entries, amenity areas and high-traffic frontage



### The Next Step

A cold front gives little warning. Questions about how the season applies to your community are always welcome.

Email [Service@NewScapeFL.com](mailto:Service@NewScapeFL.com) or use the Contact form at [NewScapeFL.com](https://www.NewScapeFL.com).

*Our job is to make your job easier.*

Resources: UF/IFAS EDIS ENH1/MG025 Cold Protection of Landscape Plants · ENY-325/LH036 Managing Southern Chinch Bug in Warm Season Turfgrasses · ENH1009/EP261 Fertilization of Field-Grown and Landscape Palms in Florida · ENH1182/EP443 Pruning Palms · ENH5/LH010 St. Augustinegrass for Florida Lawns · SS-PLP-5/LH044 Large Patch · Lee County Ordinance No. 08-08 · Lee County Ordinance No. 24-01 (amending No. 05-10) · City of Bonita Springs Ordinance 08-23 · South Florida Water Management District landscape irrigation schedules. Regulatory requirements are summarized, not quoted in full; the governing ordinance controls.

