

Our in-house horticulturist/arborist, Craig Miller, dispenses practical advice for those seeking to simultaneously conserve water and grow thriving, high-visual-impact, drought-tolerant (xeriscape) gardens and landscapes.



ARE YOU ON TOP OF IT?



Have you prepared your sprinklers to face the cold? CPNMD shut off its irrigation on September 30th and is close to finishing final system blow-outs. We ask residents to turn off their sprinklers now to prevent early freeze damage, as there is little benefit to your lawn in trying to keep it green through the fall months. If dry conditions persist through the fall and winter, plan to handwater trees, shrubs, and perennials.

Properly winterizing your irrigation system is essential. Even if you drained some water out, the water that remains in the system can expand and crack, damaging valves or splitting pipes. Freezing water in the backflow assembly can harm the internal components and may even crack the brass body. No one wants to pay that heavy price.

Please email me your questions at craig@cpnmd.org.

XERIC PLANT OF THE MONTH



Hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*) is in the same family as, and similar in habit to, the American elm. It is a medium to large-sized deciduous tree that typically grows 40 to 60 feet tall with upright arching branches and a rounded spreading crown. Mature gray bark develops corky ridges and an interesting warty texture. Insignificant greenish flowers appear in spring and give way to

an abundant fruit crop of small edible purple berries. The leaves are asymmetrical and coarsely textured and have a yellow fall color.

This xeric and deer-resistant tree is highly adaptable to many adverse conditions, including wet soils, dry soils, poor soils, compacted soils, rocky soils, soils of various pH, heat, drought, flooding, pollution, and windswept areas. Hackberry makes a great shade tree in the yard and works well as a street tree. Fruit can pose clean-up problems if trees are positioned near sidewalks or patios. Hardy to 7,500 feet.



BOARD UPDATE: During CPNMD's regularly scheduled board meeting on September 21, 2020, our legal counsel, Kim Seter, reported discussions with the **Parker Water & Sanitation District (PWSD)** will likely culminate in an **election on May 4, 2021**, at which time CPNMD residents and property owners would vote on the proposed unification of CPNMD's water and wastewater utilities with those of PWSD. We are negotiating an **Inclusion Agreement** — a complex document referencing CPNMD assets and liabilities, including water rights, well sites, pipes, valves, debt load, capital projects, and PWSD's operations, maintenance, and service responsibilities. When complete, the Inclusion Agreement will reflect the specific terms, conditions, processes, and timelines through which CPNMD and PWSD — pending CPNMD voter approval — would work to unify our respective water and wastewater utility systems under PWSD's jurisdiction. If CPNMD voters and property owners approve the proposed ballot measure in May, then we can all expect a transition period of seven to twelve months after the election, before PWSD would officially assume responsibility for providing our community's water and wastewater utility services. Prior to referring any measure to the ballot, we will thoroughly inform constituents of the proposed scope, costs, and benefits, and will host multiple public hearings. **Objective:** to secure our community's water future more wisely and at less cost than the voter-rejected ballot measures of 2016 and 2018.

Speaking of ballot measures, pending voter approval this November, we understand the City intends to reconstruct Castle Pines Parkway. CPNMD is willing to accelerate the replacement of its existing water main adjacent to Castle Pines Parkway between Yorkshire Drive and Buffalo Trail, and to locate that new water main underneath Castle Pines Parkway. By working together to simultaneously deliver both capital projects next year, CPNMD can help the City substantially lower the City's proposed debt load and, by extension, substantially lower the proposed property tax burden for all property owners in the City.

In closing, please join us in wishing our own Craig Miller a complete and speedy recovery from his recent back surgery. Craig continues working from home and can be reached via email at craig@cpnmd.org.



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