



## SUMMER SURVIVAL AND FALL READINESS

**A**ugust is one of the most challenging months for Southern California gardeners. The sun is relentless, rainfall is scarce and soil can dry out quickly. Yet, this stretch of hot weather is also a turning point. By balancing summer care with fall planning, gardeners can both protect their current crops and prepare for the most rewarding season of the year.

### ENJOY THE SUMMER HARVEST

Many warm-season crops are still at their peak. Tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, squash and melons continue to thrive in the heat. Regular harvesting encourages plants to keep producing and prevents fruit from becoming overripe, which can attract pests. Many of these crops can continue yielding well into September.

### THINK AHEAD TO FALL

August is the perfect time to prepare for the transition to cool-season gardening. Start seeds for crops like broccoli, kale, lettuce, carrots and beets indoors or in a shaded area so they are ready for transplanting once temperatures begin to drop. Cleaning out finished summer crops and refreshing garden beds with compost will create healthy soil for fall planting.

### WATER WISELY

Efficient watering is the single most important task in August. Instead of frequent, shallow watering, aim for deep, less frequent soakings that encourage

stronger root systems. Adding a three-inch layer of mulch around plants helps retain moisture, moderate soil temperature and suppress weeds. Keep an eye out for heat stress signs such as drooping leaves in the afternoon, yellowing foliage, or scorched leaf edges.

### STAY ON TOP OF PESTS

Hot, dry weather can invite pest problems. Spider mites, whiteflies and aphids are common in late summer. Check the undersides of leaves for early signs and consider low-impact solutions such as insecticidal soap, strong water sprays or beneficial insects like ladybugs. Healthy plants are more resilient, so consistent care is the best prevention.

### TIDY AND MAINTAIN

August is also a good month for general maintenance. Trim back spent flowers, remove weeds before they set seed and replace or fluff mulch where it has broken down. A tidy garden not only looks better but also reduces places where pests can hide.

### THE TAKEAWAY

August gardening in Southern California is about endurance and preparation. By watering smart, harvesting regularly, monitoring for pests and planting ahead, gardeners can protect the fruits of their summer labor while laying the groundwork for a thriving fall garden.

## OVERWATERING CLAY SOIL

**C**lay soil is both fertile and challenging. Its fine texture holds nutrients well, but its density and poor drainage make watering tricky. Because clay particles are tightly packed, water moves slowly and lingers near the surface. This helps during drought but creates problems when overwatering, as excess water has nowhere to go. In Garden Center 2, runoff can even spill into neighboring plots or the horse stables below.

Clay can be highly productive, but it requires care. In this slow-draining soil, overwatering is more harmful than underwatering. By improving drainage, monitoring moisture and adjusting watering habits, gardeners can keep plants healthy and thriving.



### SIGNS YOUR CLAY SOIL IS OVERWATERED

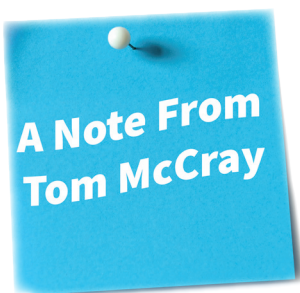
- Persistent puddles or standing water after rain or irrigation
- A sour, swampy smell from the soil
- Yellowing leaves or stunted plant growth
- Roots that look black, mushy or slimy when unearthed

## FRIENDLY REMINDERS



- Find the Garden Centers operating rules at [lagunawoodsvillage.com](https://lagunawoodsvillage.com) > **Amenities** > **Facilities** > **Garden Centers**; scroll to the bottom of the page under “Documents.”
- Fertilize container plants every two to three weeks.
- Check irrigation systems for leaks or clogs.
- Harvest regularly to encourage continued production.
- Always turn off your hose/water spigot before leaving the garden.
- Mulch located at the Garden Centers is for gardens only. If you need mulch for your manor, please contact Resident Services to register your request.
- Dispose of all waste/debris in the wagons prior to returning them. Ensure all waste is placed in the appropriate bin.
- Protect yourself during the hottest part of the day: Drink plenty of water, seek shade when possible and try to garden earlier to avoid peak heat hours.

**I hope you're all enjoying a wonderful summer and finding ways to stay cool this August.**



This is a friendly reminder that garden center tools are shared resources for all gardeners. To ensure fairness and accessibility, please return tools to the storage area immediately after completing your project.

Recently, some tools have been found left inside individual plots behind locked gates, preventing others from using them. If tools are discovered in locked plots during garden tours, the matter may be referred to Compliance.

Let's all do our part to be good neighbors and keep our garden community running smoothly. Thank you for your cooperation and consideration.