

**The Organic Dirt**  
**By Diana Loring**  
**Sunnyvale Organic Garden Center**

**Fertilize**—Fertilize your lawn and all beds with organic fertilizer. Yellowing leaves on plants are in need of iron; add Texas greensand at 80# per 1000 sq/ft. Top dress your lawn and flower beds with ¼" to ½" of compost and lava sand at 40# per 1000 sq/ft and Texas greensand at 80# per 1000 sq/ft to help break down clay soil and make it healthier.

**Water**—A deep watering is better for your landscaping. Set a rain gauge at different parts of your lawn and beds; let water run until it reaches 1" in depth. It is best to water in the morning before the sun comes up. If it rains, let your plants enjoy the rainwater as much as possible. Catch the rainwater in buckets and use it to water with. Most of your potted plants need to be watered every day.

**Prune**—Remove dead flowers to promote new and fuller growth from all your blooming plants. Only cut dead or damaged branches on trees and shrubs. Do not let your mums bloom now; keep them trimmed back for better results in the fall.

**Pest Control**—Release beneficial nematodes and sprinkle landscaping with diatomaceous earth to kill fleas, ticks, chiggers, grub worms and fire ants. For bagworms and other caterpillars, release trichogramma wasps. For spider mites and white flies, release ladybugs and/or spray with Rotenone/pyrethrin. For snails and slugs, use Sluggo, diatomaceous earth or put used coffee grounds in the area.

**Fungus**—For black spots and powdery mildew, mix 2 oz Seaweed, 1 tablespoon Potassium Bicarbonate, 1 teaspoon Joy and 1 gallon water. Spray plant leaves every 3 days until gone. Sprinkle horticultural corn meal at the base of a diseased plant.

**Plant**—Begonias, blue daze, caladiums, cannas, coleus, columbine, coneflowers, coreopsis, cosmos, daylily, esperanza, geranium, hibiscus, impatiens, lantana, lavender, pentas, periwinkles, plumbago, portulaca, roses, rosemary, ruellia, salvia, verbena, zinnia, groundcover, vines, grasses, trees and shrubs.

**Odds-n-ends**—Mechanically aerate your lawn. Mulch all bare spots with 2"-6" cedar mulch. This will help control weeds and hold in moisture. Mow weekly leaving your grass clippings on your lawn. Make sure the birds have plenty of water and food during the hot days.

