

# Magic Garden Roses

Roses in the drought and those extremely hot days.



Hello and welcome to our latest newsletter # 7.

With all the dreary news on the drought, it makes it difficult to send a cheery newsletter on your gardens but let's just look at a few positive things that we can do and a look at a few of the scenarios to avoid during these testing times.

There are quite a few companies popping up who have magnificent grey water and rain water catchment systems. Some systems mix the rain water with the grey water. I know what your thinking - what rain water? Well let's just give you

websites to two companies in particular [www.newwater.com.au](http://www.newwater.com.au) and [www.waterpros.com.au](http://www.waterpros.com.au). I have spoken to staff at both these companies, they are very switched on and dedicated to making a difference in the way we water our gardens.



Outside of going to the expense of installing a grey water recycling system, you can take some short cuts and catch all your bath water and kitchen sink water (as long as fatty pans are avoided and a good bio degradable washing liquid is used). Do not forget the washing machine, this can be tricky as you can only use the water from the second rinse cycle. The first rinse and drain will have 90% of the washing powder in it - not a good thing for the garden. I have always said that it would make a perfect toilet flusher. It's a pity there is no system that can utilise all that water for flushing as it seems pointless using perfectly good drinking water to be literally be 'flushed down the toilet'. Anyway, there are plenty of ways to preserve water for your gardens and the next step is getting the most out of the water that you have applied.

This is as simple as mulching. Pea straw, sugar cane mulch, leaf and bark mulch and the list goes on. The main thing, as I mentioned in an earlier newsletter is that if water is applied through compensated drippers, it will be far better than using mist sprayers. Misting sprayers just wet the top and can take over an hour to penetrate through an inch of mulch. Lets face it - its not the mulch your trying to keep wet (even though it has



a nice visual effect), its the plants that need the water! I have seen many people frustrated that plants are drying out and say they had been watering everyday but when I ask them to move the mulch away from the plants and see how dry it is, they are always surprised that it is still dry under there. The key is to get a good dripper system under that mulch. It does not matter if the mulch gets bone dry. That's the whole point of mulching. If you have a hose with a trigger nozzle, point it at the base of the plants when watering. Don't spray the mulch. It is about effective as watering a concrete driveway.

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We have a few people coming into the nursery with roses that are getting completely black on their stems in certain parts of the garden. This is caused by the hot water in garden hoses or the hot water in black poly dripper pipe laying on top of the mulch when it should have been buried under the mulch. It is simply boiling hot and it scorches the roses. Just be aware of it as a lot of people send pics or bring in samples of burning from hot water. Bury those dripper tubes and make sure that if your garden is on a timer that it comes on after 10pm. The water then gets a chance to cool down and roses can then draw up all the water over a longer period.

Keeping foliage healthy with Triforine is very important. If they get mildew or blackspot on these hot days, the stems can also burn because there is no foliage protecting the base of the rose. Burning of the base only happens when roses drop their leaves and direct sunlight scorches stems. Without leaves, your roses will increase in temperature and the sapflow begins to slow down or stop. As the water begins to heat up, burning marks appear in leaves and stems. (This is not common but we need to make you all aware of the risk). If you know that there is a 35c day coming up, don't dehead your roses. Even if they really need doing, just wait until the first cooler day. The way to keep those leaves healthy is to spray them with Kendon Triforine. 15ml per litre and remember to use a container that has not had any weed killer in it. This is the best way to keep black spot and mildew at bay.

Just remember that roses don't need a lot of water. They are one of the most drought tolerant plants in the garden and they love the heat. So long as you keep a little water up to them, fertilise in September, December and February, you will be truly rewarded!

We would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a very safe and Happy New Year. Lets all stay positive and vigilant in these times of the 'big dry' and hope that 2007 brings us a good dump of rain to fill those reservoirs!

Peter and Trish Boerlage and the staff at  
Magic Garden Roses



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