

# Tropical Plant Technician

Horticultural Tips, Techniques & Ideas for the Interiorscape Technician

## On Management

### Establishing Clear Priorities

Transition and change confront us on a daily basis and with them are created new pressures and distractions. As these happen, some of the company's priorities may change, and you will need to integrate these shifting priorities into your work. Maybe your priority is to always get to work by 7:00 AM so you can get to your kids daycare for pick-up by 5:00 PM. Suddenly, your supervisor wants you to come to work at 7:30 and to leave at 5:30. How do you resolve this?

There will always be many people and problems vying for your time. Sometimes the pressure is so great it's hard to think straight and work out a compromise that is agreeable for everyone. It's easy to get in a fire-fighting mode and just say "no" without listening to the full story, or a martyr role and just cave-in and not really get to the main issues. But, these will have little payoff in the end.

### Think it through

Take time to think through your priorities and make clear statements as to what you need to do a good job. Careful planning and organization is essential during times of change. Take a few minutes to clear your head and ask some exploring questions to find out what is the true heart of the issue. You may find that by asking questions you will gain insight into the problem.

Maybe the real issue is that your supervisor wants time to meet with you everyday for a few minutes and morning seemed like the best time for her. Listen without interrupting or condemning. Then, explain your priorities and your commitment to your children. With each of you sharing your issues and goals a better resolution will be reached. Make sure you take care of those things that count and by doing so you will do a better job.

# Hot Weather Watering

by Virginia I. Powers

*Spring has sprung,  
Fall has fell,  
Summer is near,  
And it's hotter than \_\_\_\_!*

Well, you get the picture. I don't think there is anywhere on earth where the servicing of plants in the summer requires the same kind of service that we give the rest of the year. Even though our interiorscape plants are indoors they can tell a change is taking place in the spring outdoors and they seem to wake-up as summer rolls around. Seasons change and so must the care we give to our plants.

Beginning in late spring we notice a quiet awakening of the plants under our care. Slowly they request more and more water as they receive more and more daylight. The temperatures rise in those sunny lobbies or the air conditioning kicks on and off changing the microclimate around the plant. Conditions vary from day to day, building to building, account to account.

For a while the plants are unsure of the season. We as interiorscapers



arrive to see one *Spathiphyllum* "on its lips" and are surprised and remorseful that we let this happen. The one in the next room is just fine. Last visit we gave both of them the same amounts they have been drinking so happily all winter. What's happening? A tran-

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TROPICAL PLANT TECHNICIAN® 719 W. McGraw Seattle, WA 98119

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