

August 17, 2009

**SUBJECT: BUFFALO GRASS**

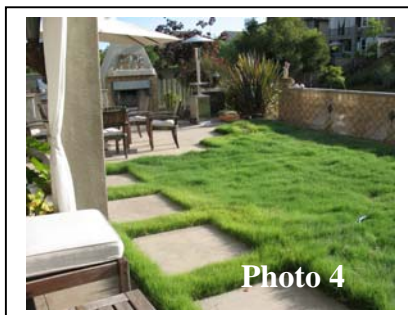
I would like to share with you all on my experience with Buffalo Grass. As you may or may not know, I planted Buffalo Grass at my house in spring of 2008, which was the first known planting of UC Verde Buffalo grass in the San Diego County. I did not do any soil preparation; I simply sprayed by existing lawn with “Round-up” (did not remove the dying lawn) and planted plugs at 12 inches on centers (See Photo 1). It did take about 4 to 6 months to fill in, but I had huge rabbit problem. Buffalo grass grows similar to Bermuda grass where it sends



runners out to root into the ground and the rabbits were eating the runners back to the plugs. I live in the area hit by the wild fires and the rodents are out of control. I literally have families of rabbits living in my landscape and they think the buffalo grass is Godiva chocolate.

During the establishment of the buffalo grass, it needed about the same amount of water and fertilizer as typical established fescue lawn. I was watering it about three times a week. So by the end of summer, I had established lawn (see Photo 2). From November to April the grass went dormant. Buffalo grass will only lose it’s color and turn brown in climates where there is a of lack of sunshine in the winter months. Here in San Diego, the grass remains green (See Photo 3), but I did NOT mow, water or fertilizer it during those months.

My water bill for the months of May and June ‘09 indicated a 58% savings. This includes my daughter moving back in the house with my wife and I. I watered the Buffalo grass in the month of June ‘09 once every two weeks and in July; I watered it once a week. I mow the front yard every other week (See Photo 2) and in the back yard I have stop mowing it. It grows only about 6 inches tall and I personally like the unmowed look (See Photo 4), but cautious that my HOA will not like it for the front yard. For those who are really “GREEN”, not mowing reduces air pollution/waste and for the person looking to save “MONEY”, not mowing saves on maintenance costs.



We have specified the planting of UC Verde Buffalo grass in the beginning of this summer on a neighborhood park in Chula Vista (the second place in San Diego County). We placed bark mulch over the plugs, which kept the dirt/dust down and allowed the area to be enjoyed during establishment (See Photo 5). Yes, you can walk on it during establishment and in fact it helps with getting the runners to root to ground.

If you have to plant the plugs after fall and in the winter months, you should overseed it with winter rye. This is common practice with Bermuda grass that goes dormant/brown in the winter months in the desert areas or on many golf courses. This will give you a temporary beautiful green grass, until the soil temperatures go up in spring and winter rye then dies off.



### **Some Quick Facts about UC Verde Buffalo Grass**

1. You cannot grow/plant it in sod or seed form.
2. The roots system can grow to six feet. This is why it is so drought resistant.
3. Because of its deep root system, it is less damaged by dog urine and rabbit droppings.
4. It does not produce pollen.
5. It is aggressive, but **NOT** invasive. Meaning that the runners root so slowly, they are easily controlled and grass clippings do not root in planting beds.
6. It produces a natural gas in its root system to kill weeds