



# Gardenmasters News

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## President’s Message

Red tide – a hot button topic that affects all of us. In 2007, I was fortunate enough to help craft the statewide fertilizer laws that help protect our water bodies. While our estuaries and waterways are indeed cleaner, there is a myth associated with fertilizer and red tide. I have lived in the Sarasota area since 1979 and this past year, 2018, has been the worst red tide event I have ever witnessed. Nitrogen is always to blame and those that apply fertilizer are always squarely in the crosshairs of the finger pointing. The fertilizer that is now mandated due to the laws is of a slow release variety and prohibits movement during rain events. While our industry is closely monitored, regulated, and inspected, the homeowner can virtually go to any box store and apply whenever and whatever they choose to do so with no reproach. In my humble opinion, that needs to change. We all enjoy Florida and we should all be accountable for the consequences. Nitrogen is the feeding agent to red tide and all forms contribute to the results. Grass clippings, dog and human feces, reclaimed water, decomposing matter, farming and even dead decomposing fish are nitrates feeding the red tide. The counties discharging millions of gallons of untreated sewage waste into the bays at various times is also contributing, to say the least. I could go on and on.

Gardenmasters is committed to our environment and being a greener, more environmentally friendly fertilizer and pest control company. I want to thank you for your patronage and to reassure you that I am using the safest, most effective, and environmentally friendly solutions to keep a balance between healthy turf and plants, and clean water.

## Rats

**By: Rick Gardner**

Winter is here and as always this time of year rats will be seeking warmer homes. Unfortunately, sometimes it is in our attics, crawlspaces, and houses. Sometimes you can hear them but sometimes it is their dropping that are discovered. Gardenmasters can perform an exclusion to seal off entry points outside where they get in. We will then trap to get rid of them for good. If you think you may have a rat problem, give us a call today!

### Bits and Bytes:

- Do we have your current e-mail address? We might need to alert you to issues, and if we cannot reach you by phone, we will e-mail you. This is especially important if you are away and we need to reach you promptly.
- Our customer portal is now open for you to pay your invoice online. We accept Visa, MC, American Express and Discover.
- Our newsletters are now loaded onto our website.

## The New Year

**By: Colt Partin**

We at Gardenmasters hope you and your families had a great holiday season and are looking forward to the New Year. Being that daylight hours are still short and we have had cool weather, the following will help your turf stay healthy and green.

**Watering** – No more than one time a week for 20 to 30 minutes in full sun or 10 to 15 minutes in shady areas. If we get a rain during the week this is not needed. Too much water this time of year promotes fungus.

**Mowing** – Proper mowing heights are critical and are as follows:

- St. Augustine – 3.5 to 4.5 inches in cut height
- Zoysia – 2 to 2.5 inches in cut height

If we should get a frost or freeze, lawns should not be mowed as stolon can be damaged creating a streaking effect from the mower’s tires. Please feel free to contact us if you have questions about your turf or landscape plants.

### HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT OUR TREE INJECTION PROGRAM?

If you have specimen trees such as a Bismarck, Canary Island Date, Medjool, or Sylvester, we offer tree injections to help prevent diseases such as TPPD and Ganoderma. For more information, please contact the office.

Call us today for your  
**FREE**  
Termite Inspection!

