

Hello everybody,

Here is a recap of yesterday's very fruitful meeting.

Valorie shared a newly found resource that was put under our Hotline Guide resources heading. Titled Seasonal IPM with 12 different monthly lists of topics and links of to-dos. Thank you for finding this tool. It should be very useful.

There is a Community Gardens event on February 15. A description of the event has been put under our Solutions Tab in Freshdesk to help answer any queries that come through,

I have two Sunset Garden Books, one already claimed by Valorie. Does anybody want the other? Although outdated in species/hybrids and new plants, the front of the book is still a great resource for zones and planting suggestions.

David gave us an update on adding a ticket to an already listed contact. This is for when you get a phone ticket and go to add the new contact but the contact already exists. The step by step method is found under Solutions —> FreshDesk - How To. There are now four How Tos: How to embed a link; How and why to split a ticket; and how Merge a ticket. The new one will be there soon. Because these how-tos are a bit convoluted, David is going to review one...or maybe more..at each of our bimonthly meetings.

A new reminder to look for **undelivered email** when you scroll down to look for **customer responded** tickets. It is hard to decipher their email addresses and if we don't transcribe it accurately, it is undelivered. It is not nicely highlighted like the customer responded tickets so you have to look for it on the ticket header line. If you can figure out how to redirect it to the correct email address, please do. Or contact the MG who took the ticket. Or call me or David for assistance.

Missy Gable has selected a platform for the statewide hotline teams to use. And it is not Freshdesk. As of Leah's last discussion with Missy, we will not have to change. And this is a really good thing since David reviewed this site and determined that for many reasons, we should stick with FreshDesk.

There was a discussion regarding signing in as Agent 2 and receiving a Suspended access warning. If this happens, take a screenshot of this error message that includes the URL and forward it to David. He will sleuth this out.

The April calendar will be up on Thursday, February 15. There will be sixty slots. Initially, please sign up for a max of two email and two phone slots. That way, everybody has an opportunity to work with their calendar. After a week, please go back on and take all of the days that you want.

We discussed the closing of the Ag Department to homeowners and that they are referring to us. I forwarded this topic to Leah and I have attached her reply below. We discussed referring the homeowners whose pest/plant problem can't be diagnosed by us to their local nursery. And reminding them to seal their sample in a closed container.

Hi Linda,

The County Department of Agriculture, Weights & Measures has advertised the Master Gardener Program on their website since at least 2011 (but likely before then). I do not think at this late date that there will be a large influx of hotline calls, but if there is, we can absolutely address it with the agricultural commissioner and request they either change or remove the wording all together. What did change, in 2020, was their policy to only accept live specimen samples from agricultural businesses and not just the general public. At this time, they also went from two agricultural scientists down to one.

For some background, I used to be the person who identified the insect samples brought in by the public to AWM. As you know, identifying an insect is only half the battle. After identification, I would scan and email the person back and always give the MG contact information to that person to follow up with. Knowing an insect might only be one part of their garden/pest issue and often people who submitted samples had other general knowledge garden questions they would like to ask. The lab would never provide anything other than a one word answer with the scientific name of the XYZ identified. The insect lab processed about 30,000 samples annually (I was there 2011-2016, and about 200-300 on the plant pathology side), so I would assume that would generate way more hotline tickets than what they do now... which is flat out deny the sample if it from a general public person. AWM reception has a list of places to direct people when they show up with in-person samples of something they want identified and have been trained by me, when it is appropriate to send people our way for information (examples on their list are PCAs for insect identification, private labs for pathology and soil testing)

I think that I covered everything from yesterday's meeting. It was a great rainy day for a meeting. Thank you to the 17 who came.

Our next meeting will be April 2, 4 pm. Please calendar the date.

Thanks to all of you for being part of this great team.

Linda

PS, Leah, please putts into our meeting notes slot on the hotline guide page. Thanks