



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Susan McCoy

p. 610-388-9330

susan@gardenmediagroup.com

HOME ALONE

Okay! The pets are at the kennel, the car is packed, the children are settled and you are ready to leave for that perfect vacation, but did you remember to arrange for someone to water your plants? If not, here are a few tips to help your plants survive being "home alone" while you are on vacation.

Stress is the number one reason why most plants do not survive being home alone. If you do nothing else, place containers and hanging baskets on cooler mulched surfaces in shady areas to reduce stress and water loss.

Another trick is to put containers inside one another -- either above ground or below ground -- to insulate the plant container's surface. Just pop plain plastic containers into more decorative pots, like one from Campania International, or in a larger plastic container buried in the garden. The plastic provides a moisture-retaining inner layer and keeps roots cooler from the summer's searing heat.

If you haven't already used a potting mix with water-soluble crystals, mix some in the upper layer of the pot's soil. Top off with a layer of mulch. And try spraying the plant with Messenger®, a revolutionary new gardening product that uses the natural protein harpin to activate the plant's innate ability to grow and protect itself from stress and disease.

For an instant watering device, cut off the bottom of one-gallon milk jugs, turn them upside down, and sink them with the lid off into your planted container. Plastic soda bottles, in smaller sizes, can be used in more compact containers. Fill the inverted jugs with water for a slow release into the subsurface soil. These, too, can be filled with water-holding crystals.

In addition to watering devices, use stress tolerant plants to increase the likelihood that your plants will look happy when you return. Some great "Home Alone" plants that thrive in the heat are Simply Beautiful's AngelMist® angelonia, Butterfly Pentas, Wave® petunias, and Aztec™ verbena. And for the shade, try Fiesta™ double impatiens. Check out other stress-free flowers at www.simplybeautifulgardens.com

For all season color, the drought and shade tolerant rose - Knock Out™ - from Star® Roses - planted in containers - will also perform well while you are away.

Remember, reducing stress for your container plants at the onset - will provide peace of mind while you're on vacation, and your plants won't feel they really have been "home alone". For more information, visit gardenmediagroup.com or call (610) 388-9330.