Buffelgrass (*Pennisetum ciliare*), a fire-prone grass introduced from the African savannah, has gained a foothold in central and southern Arizona. Left uncontrolled, it will irrevocably alter the Sonoran Desert. Buffelgrass grows in dense stands, crowds out native plants, and can fuel frequent and devastating fires in what has generally been a fireproof desert.

The control of buffelgrass and fountain grass will take constant vigilance. The seeds may live in the soil for several years and will continue to germinate when conditions are suitable. Areas once cleared may be reinfested with seeds from adjacent lands. Watch for new grass sprouts and pull them out.

**HELP YOUR NEIGHBORS**
Start by setting a good example by removing invasive grasses from your yard. Then encourage your neighbors and friends to do the same.

**VOLUNTEER**
Join one of the organized volunteer groups that work to control buffelgrass and fountain grass in parks and environmentally-sensitive public lands.

**KNOW THE INVADERS – GROW NATIVES**
Not all grasses are bad. There are many varieties of beneficial grasses that belong in the Sonoran Desert.

**GET ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**
For contacts, events, and information on volunteering, or to schedule a group presentation call (520) 615-7855 or visit [www buffsorg](http://www.buffelgrass.org)

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Pima County Code regulates buffelgrass where its presence creates a direct health or safety issue in unincorporated areas of Pima County through a progressive enforcement process.

First, the property owner will be notified of the presence of buffelgrass on their property by being issued a Notice of Opportunity to Correct. The property owner will be required to submit a plan for approval by the county to address the problem.

If the property owner does not submit a plan or fails to follow an approved plan, the county may remove the buffelgrass from the property and place a lien on the property to recover all county costs.
BUFFELGRASS
Buffelgrass spreads aggressively by seed that forms dense stands and crowds out native plants. The dense growth supports hot fires that kill saguaros and other signature plants of the Sonoran Desert.

To identify buffelgrass look for:
- A shrubby grass that grows up from a central root crown.
- Stems that branch above ground like shrubs, giving clumps a messy appearance.
- Bottlebrush-shaped flower stalks with a reddish hue or a sandy brown color when the stalk sets seed.
- After the seeds have dispersed the central stem (called a rachis) is very rough to the touch.
- There will be long, whitish hairs on the node where the leaf blade clasps the grass stem.
- Each leaf blade is 1/4 inch wide with tiny hairs along the edges of the leaf blade.

FOUNTAIN GRASS
Fountain grass is another non-native invasive grass that competes with native plants for vital nutrients and can cause a fire hazard. This grass has been used as an ornamental plant in landscaping.

Fountain Grass:
- Is a symmetrically-shaped perennial grass that can grow up to 3 feet high.
- Has slender green blades with unbranched stems.
- Turns brown if water is scarce, but retains its characteristic fountain shape.
- Has bottlebrush-shaped flower stalks with a pink or purple hue, turning to brown when the stalks set seed.

HERBICIDE CONTROL
Pulling out buffelgrass and fountain grass can be done any time of the year. Herbicide control is an effective way to kill invasive grasses, but must be done when at least 50 percent of the grass’s leaves are green.

Glyphosate herbicides such as Roundup Pro or Kleenup Pro in a 2 percent solution are non-selective, post-emergent herbicides and can kill non-target grasses and broad-leaf plants and have no effect on seeds. If you are spraying in or around water, use an aquatic-approved glyphosate product such as Rodeo.

ALWAYS follow the product instructions. It is important to spray each individual plant, covering it with the herbicide just to the point when the herbicide starts dripping off the plant.