

# Urban Rescue Program

## Mission and Purpose

To save and acquire cacti and succulents of specific interest from residences at the request of the home or property owner for the following purposes:

1. To replant at Pima Prickly Park or other Parks that we serve.
2. For resale at TCSS sponsored sales events.
3. For the activities of the Foster Care Program.
4. To be determined by TCSS and/or UR Coordinator (given to crew, taken to free table, etc.).

## Terminology

- UR: Urban Rescue
- Crew: Volunteers who are current members of the Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society.
- Tag: the identification obtained from the State that permits TCSS to remove a saguaro over 4ft in height.
- Native Plants that will need a club specific UR tag if they are going to be sold: Saguaro less than 4ft, or any other Arizona native cacti or other succulent species. Cuttings included.
- TCSS: Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society
- Homeowner: Person who owns the property where the rescue is being held. Check with the Pima County Assessor website if needed.
- PPP/the park: Pima Prickly Park
- Propagation/Foster Study Groups: TCSS members who pot up cuttings and smaller plants to take home and “foster” until survival prospects are increased. The plants can later be planted at PPP or sold at a TCSS Sales Event.
- Arizona 811/Blue Stake: Free service provided by the County that marks underground utility lines at residence before digging can take place.
- TCSS Coordinators: TCSS, Sales, PPP, and Foster Coordinators

## Role of the residence owner

Contact TCSS by Phone/text 520–256–2447 or email ([urbanrescue@tucsoncactus.org](mailto:urbanrescue@tucsoncactus.org)) describing plant(s) to be removed. The homeowner must be willing to sign a waiver releasing TCSS from any liability caused by the removal of the material including damage to any unidentified irrigation lines. Arizona 811 (formerly Blue Stake) will be called if digging appears

to be near any underground utilities. The homeowner will be informed that the rescued plants are the property of TCSS and will be used at the discretion of TCSS.

TCSS will only remove designated approved material by the UR Coordinator for the purposes stated above. The crew will not relocate, trim, weed, or perform other services typically provided by a landscape company. (We are grateful for the donation of the plants, so general clean-up is expected by the crew before leaving the site.)

## **Role of TCSS**

### **Site Scout Visit**

The initial request will be evaluated by the UR Coordinator and a determination to proceed with a visit to the site at the convenience of the homeowner. Upon visiting the site, UR Coordinator will identify, photograph, and measure saguaros and other plants to be removed. If identification of proposed rescued plants proves difficult, an expert within the club will be called. Access to plants will be determined during the site visit as well as if Arizona 811 (Blue Stake) should be called and State permit/tag(s) requested. Saguaro(s) 4ft or greater will require the homeowner or UR Coordinator to obtain a permit and tag(s) for each saguaro in this category.

Scheduling of rescue as well as tools and vehicles needed will be coordinated with homeowner and crew by the UR Coordinator. Planting of rescued plants in PPP or another location designated by TCSS will be scheduled prior to the rescue, preferably the same day as rescue. TCSS Coordinators will be informed of incoming plants before rescue is held.

### **Plant distribution**

Rescued plants designated for PPP or another park designated by TCSS, must be planted as soon as possible for highest chance of survival. The Scheduled Activity should note if the planting will occur the same day and if crew will be needed. No other materials will be removed by the crew without homeowner and UR Coordinator approval.

If any of the native cacti and succulents are not being planted in PPP, then they will receive a UR specific tag that indicates that they were removed from a residence. They can then be distributed how the TCSS Coordinators decide.

If a plant slated to be planted at the park gets damaged during the rescue or is found to be sick or infested, the UR Coordinator will determine distribution of plant.

### **Other items**

Sometimes along with the rescued plants, the homeowner would like to donate pots, houseplants that are not determined as cacti and other succulents, or other plant related items that the TCSS Coordinators have determined are not wanted. We are not required to take these extra items, however, they can be given to the crew members who would like them. Alternatively, these items could be determined to be appropriate for placement on the free table at meetings.

### **Volunteer/Crew Responsibility**

This is strictly a volunteer program. In this program, the crew should NOT expect to be compensated with plants or other materials. Prior to the rescue, the UR Coordinator in consultation with the TCSS Coordinators will make the determination of plant distribution. Any plants designated to be appropriate for distribution to rescue crew will be determined by the

Coordinators prior to the scheduling of the rescue. The UR Coordinator organizes the process and informs volunteer base of upcoming rescues, subsequent planting of rescued plants, and potential for take-home plants.

At the rescue, distribution of plants to the rescue crew will be determined by the UR Coordinator after plants designated for PPP have been planted, scheduled for planting, or taken to Amphi Holding Area for a future sales event.

## **Post rescue and planting**

Records are kept of each UR. All plants will be counted by UR Coordinator and a report will be submitted to the Board each month.

Totals will be combined with regular rescues and submitted for newsletter/website rescue odometer.

Since TCSS is a 501c(3) non-profit educational organization a letter of thank you and recognition of the gift will be sent to the homeowner.

## **Plants not part of TCSS urban rescue**

Any other removal of plants requested by homeowner but NOT approved by UR Coordinator, will NOT be associated with TCSS and no TCSS equipment or identification with TCSS will be authorized. TCSS will not be responsible in any way with this activity. This may happen for plants that are determined to be not of value to TCSS, plants in poor health, damaged, or plants too large to be safely rescued by crew with the TCSS available equipment.