

Efficient Watering Practices

Water infrequently, but deeply and thoroughly

This will encourage rooting and greater tolerance to dry spells. Plants send out extra roots in dry conditions to seek water. As a side benefit, plants often bloom more profusely when stressed, as the natural instinct to reproduce creates more flowers.

Mulch

Mulching cuts down on water loss due to evaporation. A 2-inch layer of mulch or compost is recommended. Apply mulches to shrubs, trees, annuals, vegetable gardens and even containers.

Containers

To conserve water, move containers to areas with partial shade to keep them from drying out too quickly in hot, windy areas.

Install a water-conserving irrigation system

Slow drip and deep root watering systems can save up to 60% of all water used in the garden.

Use correct watering techniques

Water early in the day, especially as the weather warms up, to reduce evaporation loss. Water less often but longer to encourage deep root growth. If drip irrigation won't work for you, try a hand-held hose rather than a sprinkler.

Water responsibly

If you use a sprinkler, make sure you don't water sidewalks or driveways. Be sure your irrigation system is in proper working condition. Condition your soil: water doesn't easily penetrate clay soils and passes too quickly beyond the root zone of plants in sandy soils. Adding organic matter to clay and sandy soils will increase the penetrability of clay soils and the water holding capacity of sandy soils. Clay Breaker soil amendment is suggested for proper conditioning.

Cut lawns to proper height

Gradually let lawns reach a height of 3 to 4 inches. Longer blades of grass can mean going three to four days longer between watering.

Discourage water competition from weeds

Keep weeds pulled and reduce the likelihood of them returning by mulching. Consider using landscape fabric between the soil and your mulch to further reduce weeds.