

- Mulch trees, shrubs and large perennials with two to four inches of organic mulch, such as shredded bark.
- Mulch smaller perennials and annuals with one to two inches of a finer textured mulch.
- No more than 30 percent of your landscape should be hardscape (patio, rock, or gravel). These materials can raise the temperature of your landscape and home.

ARE YOU MAINTAINING YOUR LANDSCAPE PROPERLY?

- Control weeds regularly because they rob your plants of water and nutrients.
- Prune plants properly and consistently to ensure good health and growth habits.
- Replenish organic mulches as needed, usually every one to two years.
- Divide and replant perennials as needed, usually every three to five years.
- Fertilize once in the fall for a healthy, green lawn in the spring and summer.
- Raise your lawn mower cutting height to three inches so that your lawn shades itself, reducing evaporation and inhibiting weed growth.
- Remove thatch and aerate turf to encourage penetration of water into root zone.
- Continue to educate yourself on various maintenance techniques.



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Outdoor Water Efficiency Checklist



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Whether you are converting your thirsty landscape to a Xeriscape™ or just looking to water what you have more efficiently, this checklist can help you. It should also provide you with some tools to create a more attractive, effective, functional and sustainable landscape that follows the Seven Principles of Xeriscape.

You can obtain more information about Xeriscape principles, water and energy conservation, and renewable energy at the Conservation and Environmental Center, Xeriscape Demonstration Garden, or visit us at www.csu.org.

IS YOUR LANDSCAPE PROPERLY PLANNED FOR WATER EFFICIENCY?

- Develop a thorough comprehensive plan considering exposure, views, soils, slopes, existing infrastructure, vegetation, drainage and surrounding landscapes prior to making any major changes or additions.
- Determine how your landscape will be used and what it might look like to create something both attractive and functional.

HAVE YOU EVALUATED AND IMPROVED YOUR SOIL?

- To find out what type of soil you have and how to best improve it, contact Colorado State University Cooperative Extension for a soil test.
- Till in organic matter at a rate of three to five cubic yards per 1,000 square feet.



IS YOUR LAWN PRACTICAL?

- Consider the type of grass and location of your lawn prior to planting. Reconsider its current location if problems exist.
- Base selection of grass type and location on purpose and function. Low water grasses or other alternatives should be considered in low traffic areas.
- Plant no more than 60 percent of your landscape with high water use lawn.
- Do not plant lawns on steep slopes.

ARE YOUR PLANTS APPROPRIATE?

- Base plant selection on intended use, exposure and soil conditions.
- Know how much water your plants need and group them with others of similar needs. Water accordingly.



ARE YOU WATERING YOUR LANDSCAPE EFFICIENTLY?

- Do not over water. More plants die from over watering than under watering.
- Minimize evaporation by watering in early morning or evening when temperatures are cooler and our winds are lighter.
- Set your irrigation system, sprinkler or hose to avoid watering hard surfaces such as driveways, sidewalks or patios.
- Water slowly to avoid run-off and ensure proper absorption.

- Reduce watering during days that are cool and short.
- On slopes or clay soil, divide the watering time in half and water twice to prevent run-off. Allow water to soak into root zone.
- Create water basins around the roots of new plants to help contain hose-end irrigation or rainfall where roots are growing.
- If more than one-fourth to one-half inches of rain have fallen, delay watering established plants.

DO YOU HAVE AN AUTOMATED IRRIGATION SYSTEM?

- Install irrigation controllers with seasonal adjustment systems that make reprogramming for changing weather simple.
- Install spray heads and rotors with check valves.
- Replace pop-up spray nozzles with more efficient rotating multi-stream nozzles.
- Check your system for leaks regularly and repair promptly.
- Use drip irrigation for trees and shrubs to water plant roots directly.
- Install a rain shut-off device.

ARE YOU USING ORGANIC MULCH?

- Use organic mulch to minimize evaporation, reduce weed growth, slow erosion and moderate soil temperature.

