

# Conserving Water in the Landscape



## Mulch Everything

Exposed soil can lose twice as much moisture as mulched soil. Use organic mulches (shredded bark, wood chips) around trees, shrubs and flowers. Rock mulches are less effective. Use straw/hay or plastic mulch in veggie gardens.



## Mulch Clippings

Don't bag clippings. They keep the soil cooler and reduce drought stress.



## Adjust Sprinklers

Adjust sprinkler heads to avoid irrigating sidewalks and driveways. If runoff is a problem on a sloped lawn, stagger your watering (15 minutes on and then 15 minutes off, for example), to allow the water to soak in.



## Prioritize Your Watering

New trees and shrubs have damaged root systems and are most vulnerable to drought stress; they get the first drink. Garden plants get the next drink. Lawns can go dormant; watering is optional. Mature trees rarely need irrigation.



## Mow Tall

Tall grass plants resist drought by shading the soil and developing deeper roots. Tall lawns stay green longer.



## Avoid Overhead Sprinklers

You can lose 25% or more of water to evaporation before it hits the ground. Use a watering wand, soaker hose or a drip irrigation system.



## Use Xeric Plants

Learn about xeriscaping (landscaping to conserve water). Once established, xeric plants can grow with minimal watering. Examples include coneflower (shown), sedum, salvia, liatris, Russian sage, catmint and yarrow.



## Use Rain Barrels

During a 1-inch rainfall, 0.6 gallons of water falls on each square foot of your roof. That's over 1,000 gallons for an average roof (1,700 sq. ft.). That's a lot of water we can use to irrigate our flowers, trees and shrubs.



## Irrigate in the Morning

This reduces loss of water from evaporation. Avoid windy days and hot afternoons.