

SACRAMENTO  
COUNTY  
WATER AGENCY



ADVICE AND  
IDEAS FOR  
YOUR NEW  
LANDSCAPE

# YOUR WATER-WISE HOME

HYDROZONING

IRRIGATION

CONSERVATION

PLANT SELECTION

**B**uying a new home is an exciting time with lots of questions to be asked and decisions to be made. Fortunately, when it comes to questions about landscaping—which plants are best for my yard? what is the best way to water my garden?—Sacramento County Water Agency (SCWA) can provide many of the answers you are looking for.

We want to help you create a landscape that you can be proud of—one that is beautiful, easy to maintain and, of course, water efficient.

If you are thinking that a low-water-use landscape has to be dry and desert-like, think again! By taking advantage of water-wise irrigation techniques and maintenance practices, and selecting the appropriate plants, you can create a lush landscape that is both beautiful and water efficient.



## PLANNING YOUR LANDSCAPE

There are four factors—climate, plants, landscape area and irrigation system—that determine your landscape’s level of water efficiency.\* Use the following information as a guide to increase your level of outdoor water efficiency.

### CLIMATE

Climate plays an important role in developing your landscape. Some plants, for example, are devastated by winter cold, while others depend on it.

In the gardening world, climates are categorized by zone. This makes it easy for you to select plant varieties that will thrive in your yard’s specific conditions. The greater Sacramento area is generally classified as Zone 9 or Zone 14. Both zones are ideal for many water efficient plant and tree varieties.

### PLANTS

Selecting plants that will flourish under natural conditions—without significant additional watering—will help you create a beautiful, water-wise garden. There are hundreds of water efficient plants, trees, grasses and shrubs in an assortment of colors and textures to choose from. Consult garden reference books or visit your local nursery for complete information on plant selections.

### LANDSCAPE AREA

One way to reduce outdoor water use is to limit the area of your landscape that requires irrigation. “Hardscape” elements such as decks and walkways add beauty and interest to your yard without the addition of water-thirsty plants and grasses. This is one of the best techniques to make your landscape more water efficient.

## DID YOU KNOW THAT MOST WATER USE —AND WASTE—OCCURS OUTDOORS?\*

### IRRIGATION SYSTEM

There are a variety of irrigation techniques available to the water-wise gardener, including manual watering, traditional and underground sprinkler systems and drip irrigation. Whichever technique you choose, be sure to apply the correct amount of water to meet your plants’ needs. You can do this by properly adjusting your sprinkler heads to cover only the target watering area and avoiding runoff and overspray onto sidewalks and patios.

Remember not to apply water faster than the soil can absorb it. Drip irrigation systems help you do this by applying water at a lower pressure and volume than traditional sprinkler systems. In addition, drip irrigation emitters are located on or near the ground, delivering water exactly where plants need it while minimizing run-off and evaporation. Electronic irrigation controllers allow savvy gardeners to automate their watering schedules. Controllers can be programmed to irrigate areas with different water needs

(hydrozones) and rain sensors can be used to automatically turn off the system during wet weather.

Remember to check your irrigation system often for water-wasting leaks, clogs and/or misdirected sprinklers and emitters. SCWA provides this service to customers free of charge. We will even provide you with a 12-month watering schedule. For more information, or to schedule an appointment for a **free** Irrigation and Water Efficiency Check-Up, call (916) 772-2226.

\*California Urban Water Conservation Council

## WHY BE WATER EFFICIENT?



Did you know that California's population is expected to grow by 15 million people by 2020?\* With few new water projects being developed, it is critical for Californians to use water efficiently.

With access to only 6 percent of the nation's available water, California is definitely a "dry" state. Not only is the state prone to periods of prolonged drought, California's rainfall is primarily limited to the winter months when a landscape's need for water is at its lowest.

Fortunately, there is an array of plant varieties—in a range of colors, textures and fragrances—that thrive under these very conditions.

## HYDROZONING



Just as important as selecting the appropriate plants is grouping plants according to their individual water, soil and exposure needs. Otherwise known as hydrozoning, this practice allows you to customize your watering program, allocating more water to thirsty plants and little or no water to drought tolerant plants. The result will be healthy plants with minimal water waste.

**LOW** water users: oaks, manzanita, rosemary

**MODERATE** water users: roses, citrus trees, camelia

**HIGH** water users: redwoods, birch, azaleas



## SAMPLING OF WATER-EFFICIENT PLANTS IDEAL FOR THE GREATER SACRAMENTO AREA ZONE 9 / ZONE 14

### PERENNIALS

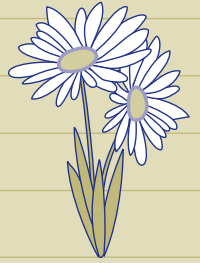
**SUNDROPS** *calylophus*

**BEARD TONGUE** *penstemon*

**MATILIJIA POPPY** *romneya coulteri*

**CALIFORNIA FUCHSIA** *zauschneria*

**MEXICAN DAISY** *erigeron karvinskianus*



### SHRUBS

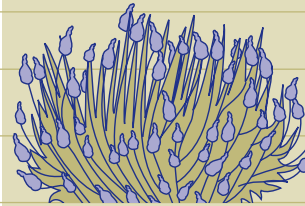
**CAPE PLUMBAGO** *plumbago auriculata*

**BUSH POPPY** *dendromecon*

**ROSEMARY** *rosmarinus officinalis*

**LAVENDER** *lavandula*

**LION'S TAIL** *leonotis leonurus*



### TREES

**GRAPE MYRTLE** *lagerstroemia*

**CHINESE PISTACHE** *pistacia chinensis*

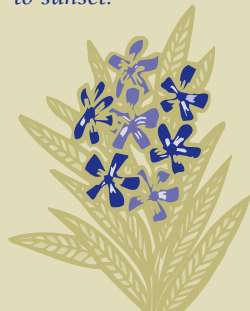
**JAPANESE PAGODA** *sophora japonica*

**DESERT WILLOW** *chilopsis linearis*

**SWEET BAY** *laurus nobilis*



For more water-smart planting options, visit the Donna M. Dean Water Conservation Garden located on Waterman Road, between Calvine Road and Vintage Park Drive. The garden is open for self-guided tours from sunrise to sunset.



## ENSURING FUTURE WATER SUPPLY



Drinking water is a limited resource. Water purveyors in the Sacramento region have joined together to implement an environmentally sound water management plan to ensure we have adequate water supplies to meet future needs.

Currently, groundwater is the major source of supply for Sacramento County, though SCWA's plans involve increasing use of surface water. During dry years, our drinking water needs will be met with groundwater. During wet years, river water will be our primary source of drinking water, allowing the groundwater table to replenish naturally. This exchange of groundwater and surface water is called conjunctive use and it is an effective water management strategy used throughout the state.

As a homeowner, the best thing you can do is much simpler: use water efficiently in and around your home.



With metered water rates, you will pay for the actual amount of water you use—similar to the way you pay for electricity and gas. For more information about the metering program, please call SCWA at 875-RAIN.

**THE MORE WATER YOU SAVE,  
THE LESS YOU WILL PAY.**

## BENEFITS OF WATER EFFICIENT LANDSCAPING

- conserves water
- includes many attractive plant selections
- minimizes pest and disease problems
- requires little fertilization
- thrives with low pruning and maintenance



## TOP 6 WATER SAVERS IN THE GARDEN

- **ADJUST WATERING SCHEDULE** with the weather and seasons.
- Water only between **MIDNIGHT AND 10 A.M.**
- **AVOID RUNOFF AND OVERSPRAY**—don't water sidewalks, driveways or gutters.
- Remove **WATER-STEALING WEEDS**.
- Apply a 2- to 3-inch layer of **MULCH** in all landscape areas to reduce evaporation.
- Improve your soil with **COMPOST**—healthy soil retains more moisture and absorbs water better.

## DOING OUR PART

SCWA is doing its part to ensure a reliable, high-quality water supply—now and into the future. SCWA follows the Water Forum best management practices (BMPs)—a comprehensive set of water efficiency programs including activities like residential water-use surveys, system water audits and leak detection, water meter installation and public awareness campaigns.

## GIVE US A CALL!

For more information about water-efficient landscaping, or other questions about water use efficiency, please call SCWA at 875-RAIN.



Sacramento County Water Agency  
3847 Branch Center Road, Trailer 1  
Sacramento, California 95827

[www.saccodwr.org](http://www.saccodwr.org)