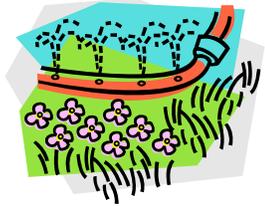




If you love a yard full of beautiful flowers and lush landscaping, you can have it and conserve water too. It's easy! Be RiverSmart about the things you do in your yard by following these easy tips:



Water your lawn and garden only in the morning or evening

Water evaporates quickly during the middle of the day. And, watering less creates deeper, stronger roots and a healthier lawn. Remember, a lawn only needs 1 to 1.5 inches of water per week.

Landscape with native plants, instead of grass, to reduce your yard's water needs

Native plants require much less water, as they have adapted to both the climate and soil. They also attract birds and butterflies.

Use mulch around your plants and shrubs

Mulch helps to lock in moisture and slow water evaporation, and keeps roots cooler.

Eliminate or minimize pesticide, pull those pesky weeds!

By catching weeds when they first appear, it reduces the need for harsh chemicals down the line, which saves time and money. Pesticides, including herbicides, can be dangerous to people, pets and wildlife. Consider organic alternatives such as introducing lady bugs into your yard to combat aphids. When you do use pesticides, use them only as directed on the package-excessive use does not benefit plants and the chemicals wash downstream when it rains.



Collect water in rain barrels throughout the year

Water collected in rain barrels can be used throughout the dry months to water your garden.

Try a push mower

A modern push mower is easy to operate and costs less to own and maintain. It's much better for the environment, and leftover grass clippings make excellent mulch for your yard.

Start a compost pile

With a compost pile, you can recycle yard debris and create an excellent source of fertilizer and mulch at the same time.

Select porous products for your driveway, yard and landscaping

Surfaces such as asphalt and concrete prevent water from seeping into the ground, instead forcing the water to flow along the surface picking up dirt and contaminants, which flow into our storm drains and eventually our rivers. Consider using porous asphalt, bricks, stones and cinder blocks, which allow water to seep into the ground around them.



Plant a tree

In our yards, trees prevent soil erosion and filter out pollutants carried by water run-off. And, trees planted nearby a river provide crucial habitat for birds and shade for fish.

Plotting your plants

Plotting out your garden beforehand can save you work and water in the future. Plants with similar needs for sun, soil and water should be placed in the same area.

Avoid landscaping plastic

Plastic ground covers limit the absorption of water into the soil, and extra water runs off our yards carrying dirt and pollutants back into our rivers and streams. Natural ground covers can reduce soil loss and help prevent weeds.

Turn off the hose

If you are interrupted or finished watering, remember to turn off the hose. A hose left running will waste over 375 gallons in an hour. Consider using a nozzle that automatically shuts off when not in use.



Stabilize your soil

Dirt is one of the top three river pollutants. Soil run-off from our gardens ends up in our rivers and streams, and can choke fish and other aquatic life.

Dispose of chemicals properly

Take empty fertilizer, herbicide and other chemical containers to your local hazardous waste center. Do not pour leftovers down the drain or in the street. Disposed of improperly, harsh chemicals can end up in our rivers and streams.

