

NIPOMO RESIDENTS: TIRED OF PAYING HIGH COSTS TO WATER THE LAWN?

HERE ARE 7 WAYS TO REDESIGN YOUR LANDSCAPE AND SAVE WATER TOO!



SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPES ARE WELL- PLANNED LANDSCAPES. NOT JUST BEAUTIFUL, THEY ARE ALSO ECONOMICAL AND EXIST IN BALANCE WITH THE SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT.

1. START WITH A LANDSCAPE PLAN

Analyze your site. This includes existing vegetation, sun/shade, ground slope, water availability, soil type, air movement, views, noise sources, and privacy.

What are your current water uses? Over 50% of household water use is utilized for irrigation and outdoor water uses. In general, this is the most significant area a Nipomo homeowner can make cost-effective changes which will directly result in reduced water bills.

Consider how the landscape will be used for beauty, a child's play area, vegetable gardening, erosion control, wildlife habitat, and climate control.



2. CHOOSE THE RIGHT PLANT FOR THE RIGHT PLACE

Redesign with low water need or native plants whenever possible. There are many fabulous choices in plants from Californian, Mediterranean, African and other low water need climate regions. Many homeowners find success by designing with a 1/3 high, 1/3 medium, and 1/3 low water use plant plan.

Space plants correctly, allow them to reach their mature size without crowding.

Avoid invasive plants. Determine which species might escape from your landscape and become "weeds" in this area.

Use the principles of fire safe landscaping in high fire risk areas.





3. MANAGE WATER WISELY

Hydro-zone: create zones of water use; group plants with similar cultivation requirements. Place higher use zones above lower use zones to maximize natural drainage patterns.

Conduct monthly inspections of irrigation controllers and reprogram as the weather changes. Check irrigation systems regularly for leaks. Adjust emitters and sprinkler heads to minimize overspray.

Reduce your lawn area. Most lawns are heavily water and chemical-dependent. Replace with low water use ground cover, landscape features such as rock, tile, or wildflowers.

Don't overwater! Follow a suggested irrigation schedule, or monitor ground moisture. Even in the hot season, areas with established plants can handle dry soil to 6" deep before needing water.

4. PROVIDE WILDLIFE HABITAT

Create habitats for wildlife. Provide food, shelter, and water year-round.

Plant California natives.

Use a wide array of species, especially those that attract beneficial insects and native birds.

5. CREATE AND USE MULCH

Some of the green waste from your garden can be chipped and applied as mulch.

Mulch not only reduces weeding, watering, and moisture evaporation, but also moderates soil temperature and helps improve soil texture.

Mulch with a 2 to 4 inch layer of bark, leaves, crushed rock, or other attractive material. To prevent damage, allow space between the mulch and the trunks of shrubs and trees.

Mulching mowers return lawn clippings to the lawn surface as beneficial mulch!

6. ADOPT GREEN GARDENING PRACTICES

Use compost and slow-release organic fertilizers to strengthen plants against attack. If you must use inorganic fertilizers, use them sparingly.

Choose controls that are the least disruptive to the surrounding ecosystem, such as beneficial insects, insecticidal soap, yucca, and others.

If you must use a chemical remedy, protect yourself, neighbors, pets, and beneficial insects. Limit your application of pesticides and fertilizers, runoff carries these chemicals into our creeks, oceans, and water table, and harms humans, pets and aquatic life.

Always dispose of unused chemicals responsibly through the SLO County/ Nipomo Household Hazardous Waste Collection program.

Compost is a free source of organic soil amendment, and reduces the need for fertilizers. Compost creates healthy soil, and healthy soil creates healthy plants that are less susceptible to attack by insects and diseases.

Don't dump yard waste in our creeks. It clogs storm drains and harms aquatic life.

Before you select a plant, determine if it has pest problems in your area. Choose disease and pest resistant varieties and plant them in healthy, biologically active soil.

Develop a tolerance for small infestations. Perfection in the garden is an unrealistic goal. A few pests keep beneficial insects interested in your garden!



7. USE RENEWABLE MATERIALS

Consider rot- proof recycled, plastic lumber instead of redwood or other natural woods.

Try broken concrete for patios, walls, and stepping stones, it's inexpensive and can be tinted to blend into your garden.

Check architectural salvage yards for great garden ornaments. Use local materials that are renewable resources.



For More Information - Contact:

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