

1. START WITH A LANDSCAPE PLAN

Analyze your site. What are the existing vegetation, sun/shade, ground slope, water availability, soil type, air movement, views, and privacy characteristics?

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 xeric (low-water-requiring) and native plants whenever possible. There are many stunningly beautiful choices of plants from Mediterranean climate regions throughout the world.

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. USE WATER WISELY

Hydro-zones: Create zones of water use by grouping plants with similar cultivation requirements. When working with slopes, place higher-water-use zones above lower-water-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 or eliminate your lawn area. Most lawns are heavily dependent on water, chemicals and fertilizers. Selectively use turf only in high-recreation-use areas. Mow the lawn less; allow the grass blades to grow to at least 3" tall. A taller lawn is a cooler lawn, which needs less water! Replace turf with water-saving groundcovers, redwood chips, stonework, or a mixture of shrubs.

**TIRED OF
PAYING A
HIGH
PRICE TO
WATER
YOUR
LAWN?**

**HERE ARE 6 EASY WAYS
TO DESIGN A
SUSTAINABLE
HOME LANDSCAPE
SAVE WATER AND
SAVE MONEY TOO!**

Artificial turf can also be used as a lawn substitute, but be sure your selection does not contain heavy metals which can contaminate your yard, and illegally pollute stormwater drainage.

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. ADOPT 'GREEN GADENING' PRACTICES

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

For diseases and pests, 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: 509 Southland Ave., on Saturdays between 11 am to 3pm, or at Cold Canyon Landfill on additional days. For a list of accepted household hazardous materials, visit www.iwma.com, or call (805) 782-8530.



Compost you make yourself 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 look better, and 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 a pest problem in the local area.

Consult the professionals, choose disease and pest resistant varieties and plant them in healthy, biologically active soil.

5. 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.

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.

6. CREATE AND USE MULCH

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.

If you DO have a lawn - invest in a mulching mower, to return lawn clippings to the lawn surface as beneficial mulch!

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