

# The Greenery's Guide to WaterWise Gardening

## Step #1- Analyze your Sprinkler System and Watering Practices

“WaterWise” landscaping is a very important topic that concerns all Central Valley homeowners and gardening enthusiasts. Water usage in landscaping is at an all time high. As the population is rapidly growing, we must learn to conserve water as best we can. It is estimated that the state will face severe water shortages within the next ten years. The city of Turlock is taking immediate action by converting all residential properties to metered water by the end of this year. To avoid higher rates or even fines, we all must learn to water landscapes more efficiently.

THE GREENERY NURSERY RECOMMENDS that existing landscapes should not be removed or neglected. This would have a devastating effect on our ecosystem. A more sensible solution is to rethink how we irrigate our landscapes. Here are some simple tips:

- Detect and repair all leaks in irrigation system.
- Follow your community's recommended or regulated watering days.
- Set the watering schedule between midnight and noon (best to water between 5 AM and 10 AM) Avoid water in the afternoon or evening!
- Set sprinklers to water the lawn and garden areas only. Avoid overspray on sidewalk and street.
- Water tree and shrubs, which have deep roots systems, longer and less frequently than shallow roots plants and lawns that require smaller amounts of water more often.
- Use soaker hoses or drip irrigation systems for trees and shrubs.
- Use mulch around shrubs and garden plants to reduce evaporation from the soil surface and cut down on weed growth.
- Remove thatch and aerate lawn to encourage movement of water to the root zone.
- Raise your lawn mower cutting height – longer grass blades retain more water, help shade each other and reduce evaporation and inhibit weed growth.
- Sweep driveways, sidewalks and steps rather than hosing off

When using a hose, control the flow with an automatic shut off nozzle

IN THE EVENT of a drought or when water restrictions are imposed, the following steps may be necessary:

- Minimize or eliminate fertilizing, which promotes new growth needing additional watering.
- Eliminate or reduce the size of your lawn area and bedding planters (Many lawns may recover after long periods of neglect. Lawns and bedding plants are relatively inexpensive to replace)
- Tree and shrubs should be watered manually with a slow method.

When outdoor water is restricted, water from bathtubs and sinks can be used on plants. Do not use water that contains bleach, automatic dishwasher detergent or fabric softener.