



Drought Alert:

Water Efficient Practices for Saving Your Landscape

Texas Cooperative Extension
Texas A&M University System
College Station, Texas

Whatever It is Called, Landscape Water Conservation Makes Good Sense

This year's drought has affected not only area farmers and ranchers, but also homeowners. Many homeowners are seeing their landscapes wither due to lack of rainfall and summer heat. Some homeowners are seeing their water bills skyrocket and several communities have asked homeowners to conserve water through water rationing.

To help alleviate landscape water problems this summer and in the future, Texas Cooperative Extension, water utilities and civic leaders across Texas cities are promoting landscape water conservation.

Whether called "Xeriscape," "Water Smart," or "Water Wise," landscape water conservation produces quality landscapes that conserve water and protect the environment.

Water-efficient landscapes are a viable alternative to the conventional, high-water requirement landscapes. For the past several years, residential and commercial landscapes have utilized more than 25 percent of the total water consumption in urban areas of Texas. This percentage can be reduced to extend the water supplies of Texas. By incorporating water conserving principles into home or commercial landscapes, it is estimated that water usage can be cut in half.

Whatever it is Called....--- con't

Water-efficient landscapes are not cactus and rock gardens. They can be cool, green landscapes full of beautiful plants which are maintained with water efficient practices. The same green, Texas-style landscapes which we are accustomed to can be achieved and still conserve water.

Landscape water conservation incorporates seven basic principles which lead to water savings:

Planning and design

Soil analysis and improvement

Appropriate plant selection

Practical turf areas

Efficient irrigation

Use of mulches

Appropriate maintenance

By using these seven principles, you can help preserve our most precious natural resource -- water.

- 0 -

Douglas F. Welsh, Ph.D.

Professor and Extension Horticulturist