XERISCAPING

LOW WATER • LESS MAINTENANCE • BEAUTIFUL

What is Xeriscaping?

*Definition: **'xeros'** meaning dry and **'scape'** as in landscape. Quality landscaping that preserves water and protects the environment*

Xeriscaping refers to a set of principles that are practical and environmentally friendly. Xeriscaping is not the same as zero-scaping and does not focus on rocks, stone and gravel but on greenery that includes native flowers, shrubs and trees.

Fast Facts

- *In North America, **50% of residential water** used is applied to landscape and lawns*
- *Xeriscape can **reduce landscape water** use by 50-75%*
- *Each square foot of turf replaced with drought-tolerant plants saves up **55 gallons** of water per year*
- *You must **reduce your water usage by 20%** through December 31, 2014*
- ***Earn $$$!** Rebates for converting high- to low-water landscaping and irrigation equipment upgrades from Santa Clara Water District*
- *Stevens Creek Reservoir in Cupertino is currently at only **11.6% capacity***

EST. 1955

CUPERTINO GREEN

A message from the Cupertino Leadership 95014 Group

This is not your grandmother's cactus garden!

Xeriscape encourages careful planning, efficient irrigation, soil improvements, the use of mulches and choosing appropriate plants for the site. Native drought-tolerant plants need less watering to remain healthy and require less maintenance! Choosing appropriate plants, permeable pavement and planting shade trees are all ways that landscaping can become more sustainable.

Winter, but No Rain

The Cupertino area has received just 18% of the average rainfall for this time of the year. Reservoirs are less than 1/3 full. You can see the **Santa Clara Valley Water District Water Tracker** at http://www.valleywater.org/WaterTracker to preview current weather, reservoir, groundwater, and additional water trends.

Programs for Cupertino Residents!

The City of Cupertino is committed to conservation of finite resources, including water, and continues its efforts to reduce Cupertino-wide use of our precious water resources through a variety of sustainability programs. To support resident and business efforts to save water, the City offers two programs, **GreenBiz** (http://www.cupertino.org/greenbiz) and **Green@Home** (http://www.cupertino.org/greenerblocks). These programs offer participants indoor and outdoor water assessments and provide no-cost equipment upgrades (e.g. faucets, showerheads, toilets). GreenBiz and Green@Home combined have saved nearly 5.5M gallons of water in Cupertino, and participants have saved nearly $100,000. The **Santa Clara Valley Water District** offers great rebates and even conducts outdoor water assessments for residents. **Bay Friendly Landscaping** (http://bayfriendlycoalition.org) and the **California Native Plant Society** (http://www.cnps.org) provide great guidance on drought-tolerant landscaping.

Please take advantage of the programs that Cupertino offers! The change starts with YOU!

Wesley Chong, Mike Green, Julia Kinst, Sabrina Rizk
2014 Leadership 95014 Participants

LEADERSHIP 95014

Benefits of Xeriscaping

- ***Conserve water*** – Share this limited resource!
- ***Less maintenance*** – Aside from occasional pruning and weeding, maintenance is minimal. Watering requirements are low and can be met with simple irrigation systems.
- ***No fertilizers or pesticides*** – Using plants native to your area will eliminate the need for chemical supplements. Sufficient nutrients are provided by healthy organic soil. Save money and reduce storm water pollution!
- ***Beautify your urban spaces*** – Spaces with more than just lawn are more attractive. Showcase the attractive flowers and shrubs that naturally grow in your area.
- ***Provide natural habitat*** – Use of native plants, shrubs and trees offer a familiar and varied habitat for bees, butterflies, local birds and wildlife.
- ***Improves property value*** – A good xeriscape raises property value, which more than offsets the cost of installation. Protect your landscape investment by drought proofing it.

Seven Principles of Xeriscaping

1. Plan and Design: The fundamental element of xeriscape design is water conservation by reducing the amount of applied water and maximizing natural precipitation.

■ ***Tip:*** *Windbreaks help keep the plants and soil from blowing dry. Use trees, hedges, shrubs or tall ornamental grasses as natural windbreaks.*

2. Improve the soil: The ideal soil drains quickly and stores water at the same time. Irrigation is necessary in a xeric landscape, at least during the first year or two until the plant's root systems are established.

■ ***Tip:*** *Add organic matter in the form of compost whenever you plant. This helps the soil hold extra moisture.*

3. Vegetation: Select plants that are native to your area. Many plants that require less water and are very attractive are becoming more readily available in nurseries.

■ ***Tip:*** *Use regionally-specific, native plants. Trees help reduce evaporation by blocking wind and shading soil. Exotic species can be extremely invasive and can spread into natural ecosystems by birds and other wildlife.*

4. Turf Areas: Reduce turf areas as much as possible. When planting new turf or reseeding existing areas, use water-saving species adapted to your area.

■ ***Tip:*** *Practice "cycle" irrigation on turf areas. Water just to the point of seeing runoff, then pause to allow the turf to absorb the water. Resume when needed.*

5. Irrigation: Water conservation is the goal, so avoid overwatering. Soaker hoses and drip irrigation offer the easiest and most efficient watering because they deliver the water directly to the base of the plant.

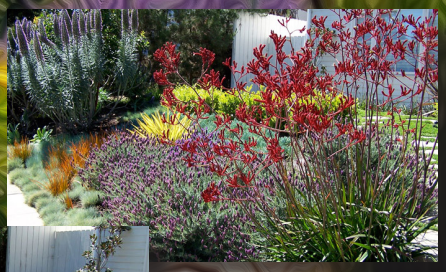
■ ***Tip:*** *How much to water? Your plants should begin to wilt during the hottest part of the day, yet perk up as soon as it starts to cool.*

6. Mulch: Cover soil surface around the plant with mulch, which helps retain soil moisture and temperature, and also prevents erosion and weeds.

■ ***Tip:*** *Organic mulch will slowly incorporate with the soil and will need to be "top-dressed" from time to time.*

7. Maintenance: Low maintenance is one of the benefits of xeriscaping! Thick mulch will prevent weeds from growing, taller grass shades roots and retains moisture. Heavy fertilizer is not necessary.

■ ***Tip:*** *Keep irrigation systems running properly. Avoid the lush, thirsty plant growth that results from over-watering.*



Resources

Cupertino Water Conservation and Drought Information
www.cupertino.org/savewater

City of Cupertino Environmental Services
http://cupertino.org/index.aspx?page=152

Chapter on Sustainability in Cupertino's General Plan
http://www.cupertino.org/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=1507

Cupertino's Green@Home Program
http://www.cupertino.org/greenerblocks

Cupertino's GreenBiz Program: http://www.cupertino.org/greenbiz

Santa Clara Valley Water District: *http://www.valleywater.org*
Rebates: *http://www.valleywater.org/programs/rebates.aspx*

Eco-Gardens Bay Area: http://www.bayareaecogardens.org/

Bay Friendly Landscaping *http://bayfriendlycoalition.org*

California Native Plant Society *https://www.cnps.org*

Grey Water Action for a Sustainable Water Culture
http://greywateraction.org

About Landscaping 10 Full-Sun Drought Tolerant Plants http://landscaping.about.com/od/plantsforsunnydryareas/a/full_sun_plants.htm

Cheeseman Environmental Study Area (ESA) at De Anza College
http://www.deanza.edu/es/esa/index.html
The Cheeseman ESA is a lush natural garden containing some 400 species of plants representing 12 California natural communities. In addition to the native plant communities, there is a xeric native plant display at the entrance.

Stopwaste.org - Drought Tolerant Gardens in the East Bay
http://www.stopwaste.org/home/index.asp?page=161

The San Francisco Chronicle article on desert plants that do well in the Bay Area http://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/Southwestern-look-in-Bay-Area-gardens-These-2514303.php

An Autograph Designed Brochure
Contact :650-814-2480
www.autograph.net