

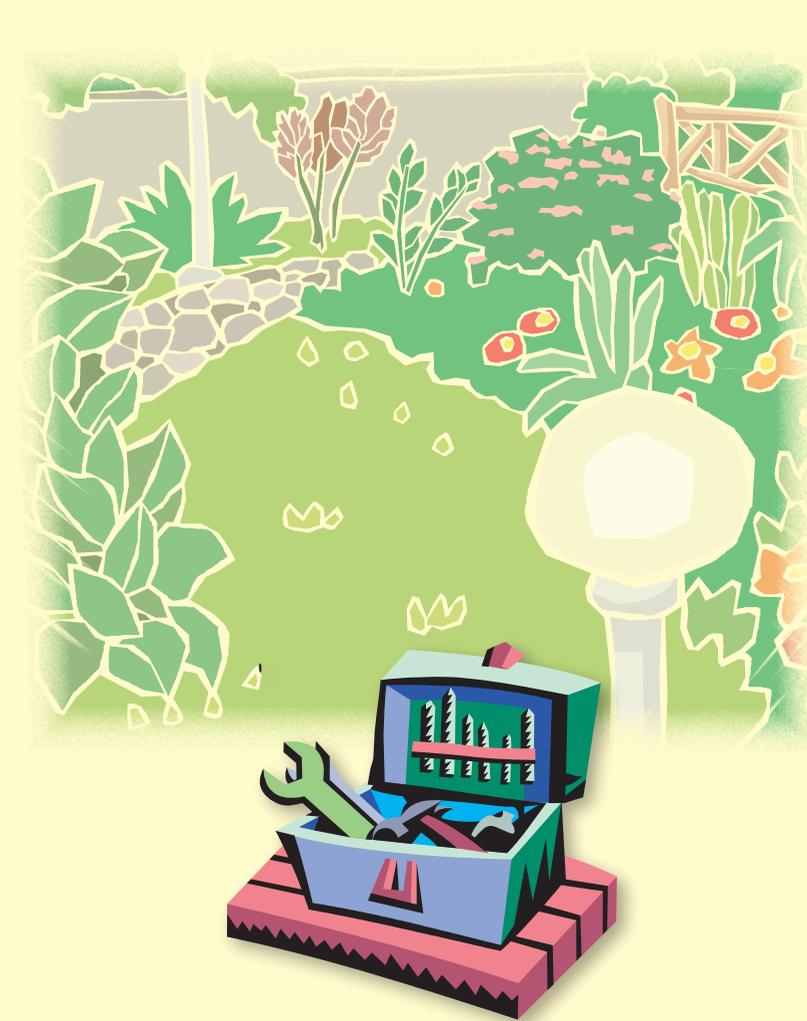
Department of Water Resources
Office of Water Use Efficiency

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Save Our Water
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The Essential Tool Kit for Making Your Home Landscape Water Efficient

Tips for Making Your Home Landscape Water Efficient



Gardening Books: *Sunset Western Gardening Book* and *Sunset Western Landscaping Book* are helpful guides for selecting the right plants for your landscape. Bring them plant-shopping with you so you can choose plants according to climate, water needs, sun exposure, and plant size.



growth that is attractive to pests. Apply fertilizers carefully; excess fertilizers may enter storm drains and creeks in rainwater or irrigation runoff.



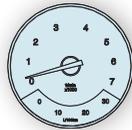
Calendar: Make a note to turn down the sprinkler timer as the summer turns to cooler fall temperatures. Schedule routine maintenance, including regular times to test the sprinkler system.



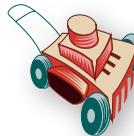
Sprinkler Timer Manual: Become familiar with the timer's features and how to adjust the timer with the seasons. If you cannot find the manual, download it off the web.



Broom: Use brooms to sweep instead of rinsing pavement.



Water Pressure Gauge: When building a new sprinkler system or maintaining an existing system, an inexpensive water pressure gauge can be used to check each faucet. Choose irrigation heads that will operate with the pressure you have; irrigation heads are labeled with the optimum pressure range. If the pressure is too low, reduce the number of heads on each valve (you may need to break up the system and add more valves) and run the zones one at a time. Low pressure causes uneven coverage and dry spots. If the pressure is too high to operate the system correctly, a pressure regulator is required. Excessive pressure damages irrigation equipment and wastes water by misting and uneven coverage. Drip irrigation systems always need pressure regulation to operate correctly.



Mower: Use a lawn mower with a mulching blade and grasscycle the clippings. If the clippings are too long to leave on the lawn, compost them. Keep the mower tuned up and the blade sharp. Consider buying an electric mower.



Timer: Use a kitchen timer as a reminder to turn off the water when using a hose-end sprinkler. There is also a wide range of battery or manual wind-up timers that go right on the faucet and garden hose.



Screwdrivers: Small screwdrivers can adjust sprinklers. Large screwdrivers can be used to determine soil moisture depth. Simply push a large screwdriver into the soil; dry soil will be difficult to push through. If the soil has moisture, the plants may not need water yet.



Tuna Cans and Clock: To find out how long to run your sprinkler system, you can use several cans or straight sided containers of equal size. Place them in a grid pattern between sprinklers on the lawn. Run the sprinklers for 15 minutes. With a ruler, measure the depth of water in each of the cans. Add up the depths and divide the total by the number of cans. This is the average depth. Multiply the average by four to get the precipitation rate in inches of water per hour from the sprinklers. Ask your local water agency how many inches of water are required per week for your lawn. Once you know how much water is being put out by your system, your water agency should be able to help you determine a schedule to water your lawn in your area. www.water.ca.gov/WaterUseEfficiency/landscape.



Computer: Visit the Department of Water Resources, Office of Water Use Efficiency website: www.water.ca.gov/WaterUseEfficiency/landscape. You will find information about conservation programs, publications, and links to other informational sites. The Save Our Water website is a statewide public education program that offers ideas for conserving water: www.saveourh2o.org. Use the Save Our Water rebate finder. Your local water supplier may also have a website.



Mulch, Compost and Balanced Fertilizers: These will help plants stay healthy and save water. Compost and mulch are available by bag or truckload or make your own from grass clippings and leaves. If you use fertilizer, choose slow-release fertilizers with balanced nutrients such as 5-7-2, 4-8-4 or 10-10-10. High Nitrogen mixtures (the first number in the formula may be 24, 28 or 32) may burn your plants and cause fast



Telephone: Call your local water agency to see what kinds of conservation services they offer. Report any broken pipes.