

Woodgate Subdivision Owner Association Suggestions for Water Wise Landscapes

General Information

Water wise landscaping provides an attractive alternative for those who are interested in water conservation. A well-designed and well-planned water wise landscape plan or xeriscape can also provide additional year-round interest and beauty to our yards and neighborhood. Xeriscaping is a system of 7 water conserving components: a) Planning and Design; b) Soil Preparation/Improvement; c) Irrigation; d) Appropriate use of turf; e) Plant selection; f) Mulch ; g) Maintenance.

In your planning process, consider the following elements: variety of height in plants, shrubs, and trees, their color/s and their character (e.g. needles/leaves/spiny/smooth). This method of landscaping includes a specific design plan to include slow-growing, drought-resistant, native trees, shrubs, and plants to conserve water and reduce yard-trimmings.

In an effort to assist homeowners who want to adjust their landscaping to a more drought tolerant Western Colorado landscape, the Executive Committee is providing the following suggestions for visible yards. (Note: **VISIBLE YARD** is defined as any area visible from the street or other lots, including side and rear yards.) The goal is to provide attractive and well maintained landscaping for Woodgate Subdivision yards that enhances curb appeal, is consistent with the overall look and feel of the neighborhood while emphasizing water conservation.

Information about water conservation in general and in Montrose County can be found at:

- <https://www.epa.gov/watersense/landscaping-tips>
- <https://www.cityofmontrose.org/688/Water-Conservation>
- <https://co-montrose4.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/31435/Water-Conservation-Plan>

Suggested Resources

Montrose Botanic Garden - <https://www.montrosegardens.org/>

Colorado State University Extension/Water Wise Landscaping - <http://www.cmg.colostate.edu/pubs/WaterWise.html>

Xeriscape Handbook - *A How to Guide to Natural Resource-Wise Gardening* – Gayle Weinstein

Xeriscape Plant Guide – *100 Water-Wise Plants for Gardens and Landscapes* – Introduction by Rob Proctor

Colorado Trees and Wildflowers – *An Introduction to Familiar Species* – Kavanagh/Leung (A POCKET NATURALIST GUIDE)

Design Recommendations

1. **Irrigation.** The most effective irrigation systems will include drip irrigation in appropriate places. Many homes in the subdivision have automatic sprinkler systems, which are recommended. It is advisable to consult with an irrigation professional to determine the most efficient system for your landscape plan. It is also recommended that you perform preventative and routine maintenance on your system, replacing broken components (i.e. sprinkler heads, valves, pipes, pump) and checking for excessive runoff as needed to ensure that water is not being wasted.

2. **Plants and Trees.** All plants and trees should be chosen carefully with attention paid to soil type, zone hardiness and drought resistance. Owners are encouraged to utilize local resources such as the Montrose Botanic Garden, Colorado State University Extension and professional landscape designers/nurseries.
 - a. **Shade Trees.** The use of shade trees can reduce the amount of water needed for surrounding grass and shrubs. Tree selection should be chosen carefully with consideration given to soil type, zone hardiness, mature size and leaf drop/clean up.

 - b. **Decorative Trees.** Decorative trees enhance the shade in the yard and provide habitat for birds and understory and create visual appeal. Tree selection should be chosen carefully with consideration given to soil type, zone hardiness, mature size and leaf drop/clean up.

3. **Planting Beds.** It is suggested that all beds should be defined and have an edge. Edging material should be either plastic or metal and be properly installed. Masonry and native rock may be used to enhance the look of beds. Bed shapes should be curved and incorporated into the existing terrain.
 - There should be a balanced amount of evergreen plantings (shrubs/groundcover) combined with flowering perennials.
 - Plantings should be staggered with taller plants to the rear when viewed from the street. Specimen plants may be used as a structural focal point. Tip: Planting in groupings of odd numbers adds interest and smaller plants should include at least three plants of the same variety.
 - Annual plants should be limited to flower pots/window boxes.

4. **Turf Areas.** Turf areas are effective to help prevent soil erosion, enhance yard appearance and can be used selectively. Protocol for proper water-wise landscape is:
 - No more than 50% of the visible yard should be planted in turf.
 - Installation is extremely important. It is recommended that owners remove all existing grass, digging deep to remove roots and weeds. Install good grade topsoil consistent with the type of turf being installed. This is an important step in future water conservation.

5. **Natural Rock/Decomposed Granite Areas.** These areas can help with native landscape design by providing a dry creek look in selected areas, but no visible yard should be exclusively or predominantly rock without plants, trees and turf.
 - Rock/Decomposed Granite (“gravel”) areas should look natural and be used to enhance the overall design
 - Minimum gravel size is 2”
 - Gravel and rock should be in colors native to the area
 - Recycled glass is not allowed
6. **Pathways.** Pathways that meander naturally through the lot may be created. Pathways should be edged, kept free of weeds and should be constructed from flagstone, decomposed granite or decomposed granite and rock.
7. **Mulch.** All beds and tree wells should be mulched. Mulch should be 2”-3” in depth. Maintenance (turning), replenishment and/or replacement should be done regularly.
8. **Maintenance.** All Water Wise yards are subject to the association’s Yard Maintenance policy.

Submittal Requirements:

1. **ACC Submittal Form**
2. **Plan/drawing showing all improvements/buildings, driveway, utilities and pump locations.**
3. **Landscape Plan to show all turf, bed and rock areas along with trees, pathways, hardscape, fences, sculptural elements or additions to the landscape.**
4. **List and number of plants keyed to the Landscape Plan.**
5. **List of stone, rock or granite to be used keyed to the Landscape Plan.**