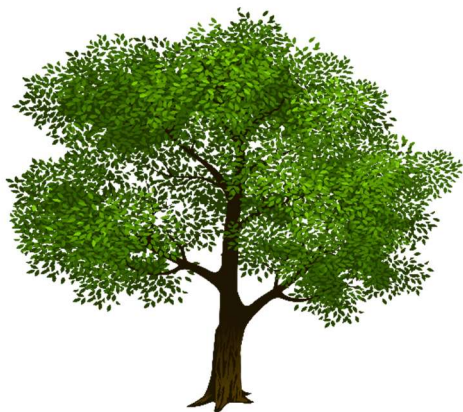


# WATER-WISE LANDSCAPING IN ROY CITY, UTAH



Utah is one of the driest states in the nation, and that is unlikely to change. The Mayor of Roy City has urged residents to consider ways they can save water. One of the best ways homeowners can do that is by choosing plants, ground cover, and irrigation methods that are water wise to make your home's landscaping more water and energy efficient. Drought-resistant landscaping allows you to create an enjoyable outdoor living space while maximizing minimal amounts of water.

This paper provides a brief overview of xeriscaping and localscaping concepts, followed by numerous links to water conservation gardens, classes, incentives, videos, and examples.

Water conservation through water-saving landscape design can be as simple as limiting the size of natural grass lawns (one of the top residential water wasters), or it can involve a complete xeriscape design for a new yard or a xeriscape overhaul for a current landscape.

Xeriscaping is not just removing lawn and covering the ground with gravel or rocks (that is "zeroscaping.")

The idea behind xeriscaping is to create visually appealing landscapes using drought-tolerant plants, water-saving irrigation methods, mulch, and other ground covers. The localscape approach is a series of landscaping patterns and practices that takes into account Utah's unique climate. Xeriscaping and localscaping with native plant species can eliminate the need for pesticides and fertilizers and save water.

A well-designed xeriscape can increase your home's curb appeal and possibly the value of your property. You do not have to base your yard design around cacti and gravel (in fact, many cactus will not survive our winters). Designing and installing water-saving landscaping does not require any more time or effort than installing more typical yard design options.

Below are some tips to keep in mind:

- Sound landscape planning and design: Create a diagram, drawn to scale, that shows the major elements of the landscape, existing vegetation, and other permanent elements.
- Limit turf (lawn) to appropriate, functional areas: Areas of lawn use the most water, so it is important to limit the amount of water-guzzling grass in the environment. Warm-season native grasses that have been cultivated for turf lawns can survive with a quarter of the water that bluegrass varieties need.
- Use alternatives to grass/turf, such as pavers, artificial grass, rock gardens, flowering native plants, and ornamental grasses.
- Use water-efficient plants: When deciding what to install in your yard, consider native and drought-resistant plants. They typically require less maintenance and little or no watering once established.

- Plant water-wise trees to shade buildings and the ground.
- Irrigate efficiently: A xeriscape can be irrigated efficiently by hand or with an automatic sprinkler system. Group plants according to their water needs. Zone turf areas separately from other plant sections, so efficient irrigation methods can be used appropriately for each zone.
- Add compost and mulch: Use compost when planting and cover the area with mulch afterwards. Compost helps keep the water by the plant's roots. Mulch keeps plant roots cool, prevents soil from crusting and cracking, minimizes evaporation, prevents dust blowing in the wind, and reduces weed growth. Bark chips or wood grindings should be 2 to 4 inches deep.
- Use organic and natural products wherever possible.
- Landscape maintenance: All landscapes require some degree of care during the year. Check and repair irrigation systems each spring.
- Reuse greywater or capture rainwater. Reusing grey water or capturing rainwater as it flows off your roof offers free sources for landscape irrigation.
- Let it super soak. Up to one-third of the water from sprinklers can evaporate during the heat of the day. Water more deeply and less frequently; frequent, shallow watering wastes water.
- Follow the watering guidelines established by the Roy Water Conservancy District at <http://www.roywater.com/> The average homeowner in Utah applies almost double the amount of water onto their landscape than necessary.
- Adjust irrigation timing seasonally. Install a rain sensor to stop watering when it's raining.
- Set up a drip irrigation system for your non-turf planting beds. Drip irrigation systems water plants right at the root and are an efficient alternative to sprinkler systems. Even higher water use plants will thrive on less water if they are on a drip system.
- Xeriscape – not zeroscape. A zeroscape is nothing but rocks, usually gravel. Devoid of plants, and therefore habitat, they create heat islands and are often unattractive.

**Note:** Residents may not cement their yards. Cement is strongly discouraged in the parking strip also (*if repairs are needed in the area, the cement may need to be broken and the homeowner would be responsible for repair.*)

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## The 7 Principles of Water-Wise Landscaping

A water-wise landscape is one that is functional, attractive, and easily maintained in its natural surroundings. A water-wise landscape also helps conserve water. See Utah State University's CWEL (Center for Water-Efficient Landscaping) website for details: <https://cwel.usu.edu/principles>

- 1) Planning and Design
- 2) Soil Preparation
- 3) Plant Selection
- 4) Practical Turf Areas
- 5) Mulch
- 6) Efficient Irrigation
- 7) Landscape Maintenance

## Videos Explaining Xeriscaping and Drought Tolerant Landscaping

- “What is Xeriscaping?”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AQGZLCMcu1Q> (*Weber Basin Conservancy District*)
- “Xeriscape is not a garden, it’s a system”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=knpuK6nKvkQ> (*GreenCO Colorado*)
- “Five tips to landscaping in the climate and environment you live in”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xTsMLYEsPKA> (*Cynthia Bee of Localscapes, TEDxSalt Lake City speech*)

## The 5 Steps of a Localscape

- 1) Central Open Shape
- 2) Gathering Areas
- 3) Activity Zones
- 4) Paths
- 5) Planting Beds

Utah is different—our weather, precipitation, climate, and even culture are unique from other parts of the country. Review the principles and information at <https://localscapes.com>

## Free Water Audits and Lawn Watering Guide

Water audits are designed to help homeowners be as efficient as possible with landscape irrigation. Water checks evaluate the automated sprinkler system efficiency and provides customized irrigation schedules.

- Schedule a free water audit with Weber Basin Water Conservancy District. Website: <https://weberbasin.com/Conservation/WaterAuditInfo>
- WaterCheck is a Utah State University (USU) extension program of the Center for Water-Efficient Landscaping (CWEL). Sign up for a water check at their website: <https://cwel.usu.edu/watercheck>

- You can also do your own water check by following the instructions from the USU CWEL website: <https://cwel.usu.edu/do-your-own-water-check>
- The Division of Water Resources' Slow the Flow webpage provides a weekly lawn watering guide by county, determining whether no, one, two, or three irrigations are needed. Website: <https://conservewater.utah.gov/guide.html>

Water-Wise and Water Conservation Gardens You Can Visit *(check the website to determine hours and location):*

- Ogden - Ogden Botanical Gardens: <http://ogdenbotanicalgardens.org/>
- Ogden - Weber Basin Water Conservation Learning Garden: <https://weberbasin.com/Conservation/LearningGarden> (also, virtual tour on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dFBFbkYUP4>)
- Kaysville - USU Botanical Center/Utah House: <https://usubotanicalcenter.org/>
- Salt Lake City - Greater Avenues Water Conservation Demonstration Garden: <https://www.slc.gov/utilities/conservation/demonstration-gardens/>
- Salt Lake City - Red Butte Water Conservation Garden: <https://redbuttegarden.org/>
- West Jordan - Conservation Garden Park: <https://conservationgardenpark.org/>
- Sandy - Sego Lily Gardens: <https://www.sandy.utah.gov/1334/Sego-Lily-Gardens>
- St. George - Red Hills Desert Garden: <https://www.wcwcd.org/conservation/gardens/>

### Examples of Xeriscaped Landscapes

- "Proven Results: Real Localscapes": Utah residents share their experiences and explain how they were each able to improve their landscape from the ground up, with before and after photos. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tcq06w3\\_DAA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tcq06w3_DAA) (via Localscapes)
- Go to Pinterest.com and YouTube.com and search "Utah xeriscape" for lots and lots of ideas.

### Free Classes on Water-Wise Landscaping

- The Utah-based Localscapes website offers the follow classes: "Introduction to Localscapes," "Localscapes University," "Creating Water-wise Park Strips," "Localscapes Landscape Design Workshop," and "Localscapes Irrigation Workshop. Website: <http://localscapes.com>
- Weber Basin Water Conservancy District offers many classes throughout the season. Classes include: "Landscape Design," "Artificial Turfgrass," "Weeds: Control and Prevention," "Water-wise Landscaping," "Park Strips," "Cactuses and Succulents," "Ornamental Grasses," "Drip Irrigation," and much more. Check not only the current schedule but past classes as well. The website also offers a comprehensive section on how to water efficiently and wisely, titled "Landscape Irrigation and Turf Management Basics." Many Localscape classes are available through them as well. Register in advance to view the live classes. Website: <https://www.weberbasin.com/Conservation/LearningGarden>
- Ogden Botanical Gardens offers a variety of in-person gardening classes each year. Website: <https://cwel.usu.edu/demonstration-garden> *(Note: not all classes are free.)*
- West Jordan's Conservation Garden Park offers many webinar classes throughout the season. Some highlights include: "Creating Water-wise Park Strips," "Best Perennials and Grasses for

Utah,” and “Best Trees and Shrubs for Utah.” Classes are free, but advance registration is required. Website: <https://conservationgardenpark.org/events/>

### Water-Wise Plants and Trees You Can Plant

- List of Water-Wise Plants for Utah Landscapes compiled by the Utah Water-Wise Plants Committee: <https://waterwiseplants.utah.gov/plants.pdf>
- Comprehensive, searchable database by Conservation Garden Park of water-wise plants. Search plant type, bloom season, light requirement, foliage color, bloom color, irrigation requirement, filter by Utah native plants, and much more. Website: <https://conservationgardenpark.org/plants>
- Searchable database of water-wise plants by Utah Division of Water. Search by season, flower color, water requirement, size, hardiness, and more. Website: <https://waterwiseplants.utah.gov/default.asp?p=Search&Cart=>
- Master database of plants in the garden under development by Weber Basin Water Conservancy District. Eventually, a full description will be provided, along with the plant’s common name, botanical name, water and sun requirements and photos. Website: <https://weberbasin.com/Conservation/LearningGarden>
- Native Plant List by PlantNative – This is a straightforward "starter" list of Utah native trees, shrubs, and perennials, with exposure, drought tolerance, and highlighted comments. Website: <http://www.plantnative.org/rpl-ut.htm>
- Native Plants for the Intermountain West compiled by USU’s Center for Water-Efficient Landscaping: Alphabetic list with photos of Utah native plants. Website: <https://cwel.usu.edu/westernnativeplants/plantlist.php>
- Database by Utah State University with photos and text descriptions of 245 tree species found in Utah and the Intermountain West. Browse through the complete tree list or narrow your search by selecting from 21 characteristics. Website: <https://treebrowser.org/>
- Salt Lake County articles “Choosing Native Plants,” “Rethink Your Lawn,” “A Word About Weeds”: <https://slco.org/watershed/stream-friendly-practices/choosing-native-plants/>
- Assorted blog posts about native plants in Utah: <http://www.newutahgardener.com/search/label/native%20plants> (New Utah Gardener)

The photos on the following page are included with permission from Utah’s Conservation Garden Park. The plants are listed in the order they bloom, so if you include one plant from each row, you could have almost continuous color through late spring and summer.





Pasque Flower



Sundancer Daisy



Tufted Primrose



Blue Flax



Wasatch  
Penstemon



Firecracker  
Penstemon



Sulfur Buckwheat



Silver Sage



Chocolate  
Flower



Agastache



'Wild Thing'  
Salvia



Russian Sage



Fire Chalice



Desert 4 O'Clock



Pitcher's Blue  
Sage



Alkali Sacaton  
Grass



Little Blue Stem  
Grass



Partridge Feather



Horehound



Curlicue Sage

*Permission to use photo received 7/21/2021 from Conservation Garden Park at 8275 South 1300 West, West Jordan, Utah.*

## How to Use Google Maps to Create a Landscape Map of Your Property

- “Every good landscape begins with a plan, and every good plan begins with a base map.” This video explains how to use google maps to create a base map for your property. YouTube video from Localscapes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YYkYkonjgos>

## Free Landscape Plans, Including Your Parking Strip

- The Water Conservation Park in West Jordan offers several ready-made water-wise landscape plans, including “Low Maintenance Yard,” “Utah Natives,” “Harvest,” “Winter Interest,” and “Entertaining and Hardscape” designs. Website: <https://conservationgardenpark.org/readymadeplans>
- Utah State University’s Center for Water-Efficient Landscaping offers several ready-made water-wise landscape plans. Website: <https://www.usdemonstrationstreet.com/>
- Designs for water-wise park strips are offered by Localscapes. Designs include “Minimalist,” “Year-Round Simplicity,” “All Season Color,” “Lawn Look Alike,” “Low Grow,” “Lush with Less,” and “Mature Makeover.” Website: <https://localscapes.com/designs>

## Rebates and Incentives for Saving Water in Your Landscape

- Utah Water Savers for installation of smart controller for automated landscape watering. Website: <https://utahwatersavers.com/Program/6/smart-controller>
- Incentives for commercial installation of smart central control watering systems may be available. Website: <https://www.weberbasin.com/Conservation/Rebates>
- Weber Basin Water Conservancy District for flipping your park strip from turf to water-wise landscape. Website: <https://www.weberbasin.com/Conservation/Rebates> **PENDING**

## Roy City Code Excerpts Referencing Residential or Mixed Use Landscaping **REVISION TO CODE PENDING**

“Landscaping, such as but not limited to, grass, rocks, trees, shrubs, and ground cover is required to be installed in all yard areas of all residential lots ... Landscaping of residential lots shall be maintained in a healthy condition. Yard areas shall not lack appropriate turf, plant or ground cover material so as to cause excessive dust or allow the accumulation of debris.” [10-10-20]

“c) Landscape Materials. All proposed plants and landscape materials shall be consistent with (but not uniform) and of a similar scale with existing natural landscape, neighboring landscape, and adjacent streetscape areas where appropriate. Drought tolerant plant materials are encouraged. Landscaping improvements may also include berming, contouring, rocks, and boulders.

d) Native Vegetation Materials. All landscape plans are encouraged to use vegetation native to northern Utah.” [10-13-5 (Section I) and 10-14-11 B(9)]

**Note:** Before planting trees in the parking strip, you must contact the Parks Department to determine if the trees are a permitted type.