

# Water Wise Gardens

A water wise garden can create a beautiful shaded oasis, enhance biodiversity and provide fresh and healthy food in your backyard. Replace thirsty lawns with flowers, vegetables, shrubs and trees and use up to 66% less water.

## Nine tips for a water wise garden:

**1** Do not water on windy, cool, overcast or rainy days. Install a rain shut-off device to your irrigation system that will automatically turn your system off when it is raining.

**2** Group plants with similar irrigation needs. Water plants early in the morning or later in the evening to avoid evaporation from the sun.

**3** Containers dry out faster than beds, so keep soil as moist as needed. Make sure containers have drainage to prevent root rot.

**4** Garden with native plants. Because they are adapted to the local climate, mature native plants are happy with only rainfall.

**5** Water plants at the roots. Slow, deep watering once a week encourages drought-tolerant root growth. For trees, water along the drip line.

**6** Install a micro/drip irrigation system. Micro/drip systems efficiently water plant roots and make it easy to tailor watering to individual plant needs.

**7** Weed regularly as weeds compete for moisture. Avoid overwatering your plants to minimize weed growth.

**8** Use mulch in your garden. Add a 5 – 10 cm layer of mulch an inch from plant stems to reduce weeds, conserve moisture, moderate soil temperatures and add nutrients. Use leaves, compost, grass clippings, straw, wood chips or coarse bark as mulch.

**9** Keep your soil healthy. Healthy soils will help your garden thrive and need less water. Good soil has a balance of pH, moisture retention, proper drainage and organic material.

Drip line