



SOUTHEASTERN COLORADO

Water Conservancy District

"Your investment in water"

Water Wise Demonstration Garden

Garden Maintenance

Introduction

Maintaining your xeric garden will keep it healthy and beautiful. If designed properly these landscapes can be easier to maintain than traditional gardens. Xeric gardens do require some weeding, occasional pruning, pest management, and irrigation system maintenance.

When you add new plants to your garden they will require additional water during their first year as they get established. This is done to simulate nature's wet years, when there is enough rain to support new plants growing to maturity. During the first month after planting you should water 1-2 times per week or as the soil dries out and then after that they will need a weekly watering for the rest of the year. After the first year, depending on the plants you use you can cut back to monthly watering or even no supplemental watering. Annual fertilizing can benefit some plants but most native plants don't require it.

Native turf grasses like Buffalograss and Blue Grama can survive with no irrigation but will become brown and dormant in summer. To keep these lawns green during this period requires a deep watering of 1-2 inches every 2-4 weeks. Fertilizer should be added in May to mid-June and again in late July.

Heavy pruning of trees and shrubs should be done in late Winter when plants are dormant. It is best to not cut more than one-third of woody growth per year. Ornamental grasses and herbaceous plants should be cut back to near ground level in early Spring and it's also a good time to reapply organic mulches.

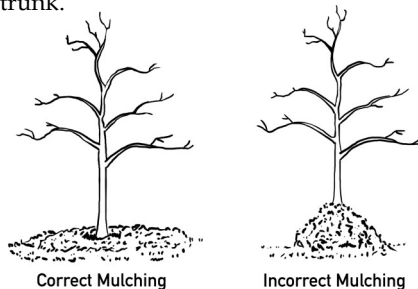


Composting

Consider building a compost bin to recycle leaves, clippings, and food scraps into food for your soil. By composting yard waste and food scraps, then incorporating it into your garden you can improve the quality of your soil over time. It also reduces trash in landfills so it's a win-win!

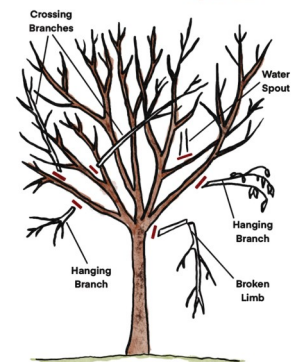
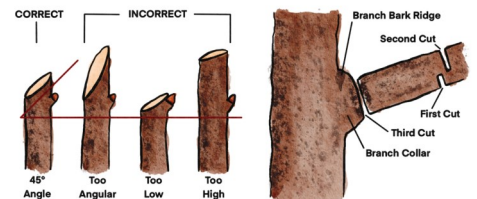
Mulching Properly

Organic mulches such as wood chips, bark, straw or hay should be re-applied regularly as they break down at a depth of 2-4 inches. When mulching around trees do not build a "mulch volcano" and keep it a few inches away from the trunk.



Seasonal Checklist

- **Spring** - Clean-up, Irrigation Maintenance, Planting, Mulching
- **Summer** - Watering, Weeding, Fertilizing
- **Fall** - Mulching, Clean-up
- **Winter** - Pruning, Planning



Tree Pruning Guidelines

More information can be found on our website:

www.secwcd.org/content/xeriscape-gardening-information

