

How To Water Less This Summer

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From creating shade to getting rid of some grass, there are a few ways to reduce your water use during the hottest, driest months of the year.

As the summer heat settles in, more and more water will be used to quench our thirsty lawns. Outdoor watering during our hottest months can account for 50 to 80 percent of a home's total water use, according to the Texas Water Development Board.

To help keep your water use in check this summer, try these water-wise gardening suggestions.

- **Create shade.** Nothing beats the Texas heat like a cool shady spot. Install a vine-laden pergola. Use crossvine, butterfly vine or San Antonio's favorite vine, queen's crown. Shady areas lose moisture at a much slower rate, reducing the need for frequent applications of water, even during the summer.
- **Eliminate as much lawn as possible.** Lawns use two to four times more water than native plants like Lantana and Salvia. Reducing the grass reduces the water.
- **Avoid over-fertilizing.** Frequent and heavy applications of fertilizer do help your lawn grow by leaps and bounds, but all that lush, new growth also results in grass that needs (you guessed it) more water.
- **Mulch.** One to two inches of hardwood, shredded cedar, or pine bark mulch will reduce weekly watering to just two per month.
- **Retire or retrofit irrigation zones.** You may qualify for the Residential Irrigation Design Rebate if you retire an unnecessary zone or your entire system, or convert pop-up spray zones to drip irrigation. Just call 210-704-SAVE to schedule a free irrigation consultation.

Watering responsibly is something we can all strive to do better. Visit GardenStyleSanAntonio.com for more tips on how to have a beautiful yard that also saves water.