

# Water Conservation

## THE BASICS

Watering DEEPLY is the most effective way to water, you want water to percolate deep into the soil. Water longer, but less frequently. A deep watering of established trees and shrubs will provide respite from dry conditions for a longer period than a shallow application. Watering early in the day reduces the amount of water lost to evaporation.

## MAINTENANCE

A good quality, spring-loaded water nozzle is a must. Consider one with multiple spray patterns for different garden uses and an immediate shut off when the trigger is released (just in case).

For harder to reach locations, use a long watering wand. Always aim to get the water close to the base of the plant without spraying water through the air, where it will just evaporate.

Replace or repair leaking hoses and make sure connections are tight. Worn washers and damaged connectors are easily replaced. Add a quick coupling system to make moving your hose between locations fast and easy. Leaky watering cans are no good, get a new one. A larger capacity watering can will reduce the number of trips you'll need to make when watering. An 8L capacity is a nice compromise between a good amount of water without too much weight.

## BEING WATER WISE

Use "grey water" where possible. This is common practice in warmer climates where water conservation is year round. Use the water left in the sink after washing dishes to water shrubs or flower beds.

## GARDEN CARE

Keep your garden weed free, since weeds compete with your plants for water. Install a drip irrigation system to water your most valued plants or garden locations. They are easy to install and reap rewards in time saved and efficient watering for years to come.

Make watering plants in pots and containers easier by using products like "Water Globes" or "Plant Nanny" that hold water and metre it out as needed. These are great when you must leave your potted plants unattended for several days at a time.

Stand plants in saucers and use plant dollies that can be wheeled into shady locations during the hottest part of the day.

Mix moisture holding soil amendments evenly into the soil around recently planted plants or before planting. Amendments include peat moss, coir (coco fibre), compost and moisture holding polymers.

Install specialized watering bags (Hippo Bags) around both recently planted and established trees to supply water slowly to the root zone.

Plants in pots and hanging baskets need to be watered as often as twice daily during hot weather. Check the moisture level of the soil with a moisture meter to determine the need for water, and then apply water using either a drip irrigation system or by hand.

## MULCH

Mulching creates a barrier on the soil that prevents erosion, drying out, and weed growth while adding visual appeal. Options include; bark, leaves, compost, stones, straw, or even hemp. Water well before applying a 5-7cm deep layer to trap as much moisture as possible within the soil.