

Landscaping Tips

Make each day **Earth Day** & be **Water Wise** with Butler Water

There are many steps you can take outdoors to create an attractive environment while also reducing the amount of water you'll need to keep the garden and landscape beautiful.

Plan Ahead

Create shade. Shade cast by trees or structures can cool the landscape by as much as 20 degrees, reducing heat buildup and water evaporation from the soil.

Create "watering zones." Group plants that require more watering together; group low water using plants as well. This allows for more efficient watering and SAVES YOU TIME and EFFORT.

Select the right plants. Visit your local nursery. They can tell you about the plants best suited for your area. Select low water use plants for sunny areas, dry spots or windy areas. And remember bigger is not always better. Smaller plants will generally save you money and can use less water too.

Mulch

Think of mulch as sun block for plant roots. Just two to four inches of mulch can substantially retain soil moisture, slow evaporation, and protect roots from overheating, which is especially helpful to ornamentals and vegetables.

Hate weeding? Start mulching. Mulch can reduce or eliminate weeds that compete with landscape plants for moisture, nutrients, and sunlight. Mulch can be organic or inorganic material. Organic mulches, such as pine straw, pine bark, and shredded hardwood, are the best choices because they retain moisture and add nutrients to the soil as they decompose.



Butler County
Water System

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Work the Soil

It's all about the soil. **Good soil:**

- Holds water well
- Provides nutrients
- Is aerated to allow water to penetrate several inches to reach deep roots
- Has large particles that allow water flow and absorption. Dense soils such as clay are slow to absorb water, so they're prone to wasteful runoff.

You can prepare your soil by tilling the soil about six inches deep and then adding organic matter to enrich the soil before planting.

Use Water Wisely

- Know how much water your plants need.
- Know how much water each part of your watering system applies.
- Match your watering system output to your plants' needs.

And remember:

- Morning is the best time to water, because watering in the evening can invite fungus to grow on your plants at night.
- Put a rain gauge in your yard. If you get $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 inch of rain in a week, you can skip your next lawn watering.
- If you have an automatic sprinkler system, attach a rain sensor or moisture sensor shutoff device.
- Use a rain barrel to collect rainfall and runoff from downspouts. Use the rainwater to water container plants and gardens.