

## Choose Drought-Tolerant Plants and Grasses Instead of Water Thirsty Lawns

There are hundreds of colorful, attractive plant varieties that adapt well to our Mediterranean climate. Many survive on winter rain alone and need very little or no water during much of the year.



PHOTO BY B. TRAINOR

As shown above, there are many new, drought-tolerant grass varieties available that use much less water than common grasses. Consider converting your lawn to one of these “native” grasses.

*Visit your local landscape suppliers, nurseries and WAC's website for more planting ideas, valuable tips on turf alternatives and our interactive CD ROM on selecting plants.*

## Small Lawns Are OK If Maintained Properly

If you decide to keep some lawn area, follow these tips to keep it looking great while conserving water.

- Feed your lawn regularly
- De-thatch and aerate annually
- Water infrequently yet thoroughly
- Increase your mowing height

Turf removal is easy with the right equipment. Visit your local equipment rental yard for advice on the most efficient lawn removal tools.

After you have removed your turf, amend your soil deeply with plenty of composted organic material. The humus that develops will help bind soil particles, hold nutrients and retain water.



Be sure to provide your new plantings with organic fertilizer to help establish a strong, large root system.

## Retrofit Sprinkler Systems to Drip Irrigation

Converting your old sprinklers to drip or soaker hose irrigation is a smart choice. These systems provide slow, deep watering.

Also, be sure to control your irrigation system with a modern evapotranspiration controller. These controllers automatically adjust the amount of water applied according to the changing weather and can reduce water use by up to 45%!

Visit the Water Awareness Committee of Monterey County (WAC) at [www.waterawareness.org](http://www.waterawareness.org) to view our Lawn Watering Guide. It will help you determine the proper timing for your irrigation system.

## Consider Alternatives to Plantings and Irrigation

Hardscape elements such as patio pavers, stone pathways, wooden decks and dry creek beds can be the most beautiful features of a garden. The inclusion of hardscape features in a landscape reduces maintenance and maximizes water conservation.

## Reduce or Eliminate Your Lawn Area and Save

- **Save time** – Lawn maintenance can take hours a month.
- **Save money** – Water, fertilizer, gasoline and labor are costly.
- **Reduce pollution** – Lawn upkeep puts chemicals in our waters, exhaust in our air and noise in our neighborhoods.



## Did You Know?

About 30,000 gallons of water a year is commonly used to maintain every 1,000 square feet of turf. This amount of water costs more than \$100 a year. Most water bills can be reduced by 50% or more by replacing lawns with water-wise plantings and alternative ground covers.

*Water-wise lawn alternatives are a smart choice!*

## WAC Membership

*Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments*

*California-American Water Company*

*California Water Service Company*

*Castroville Water District*

*Marina Coast Water District*

*Monterey County Health Department*

*Monterey County Water Resources Agency*

*Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency*

*MCSI Water Systems Management*

*Monterey Peninsula Water Management District*

*Laguna Seca Golf Ranch*

*Rancho Cañada Golf Club*



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[www.waterawareness.org](http://www.waterawareness.org)

*If you're tired of paying high water bills or struggling to maintain the "perfect" lawn, it just may be time to*

# Retire Your Turf

