



Be Water Wise, Outside!

FIVE Simple Tips for Saving Water at Your Community Garden

- 1. Soil is the foundation of your garden.** Healthy soil provides plants with the water and nutrients they need to thrive. All soils can be improved by adding organic matter, such as compost. Compost enriches the soil with nutrients, increases water retention and enhances soil texture and structure. Spread one to two inches of compost annually on garden beds. The compost will naturally integrate into the soil, so it does not need to be worked in.
- 2. Water early in the day or in the evening.** When temperatures heat up and the sun is high, water evaporation is at its peak. By watering in the morning or evening, you ensure that more of the water soaks into your garden, benefiting the plants.
- 3. Watering deeply** (about 30 mins) once a week uses less water than shallow (about 10 mins) daily watering and is beneficial in promoting strong, deep root growth, and makes plants more resilient to dry spells, reduces evaporation and ensures more of the water reaches the plants.
- 4. Drip irrigation is the most efficient** at getting water to the root zone of plants, while keeping leaves and stems dry (which will help keep many plant diseases at bay). Drip irrigation are systems that apply water directly to the soil, rather than spray water on to the plants from above. With drip irrigation, water is applied slowly and longer for deep watering.
- 5. Mulching is critical in a low-water garden.** To mulch your garden beds, simply add a four-to-six-inch layer of shredded post peelings, wood chips, or fallen leaves to the top of your soil. Not only will this make for a lower maintenance garden, but it will also provide a healthy ecosystem for ladybugs and other beneficial insects, so you'll have fewer pest issues!



Other Tips

Rototilling isn't recommended. It can degrade soil structure, disrupt the soil organisms and microbes that are important to a healthy soil ecosystem, and can expose dormant weed seeds to the surface which increases weed problems.

For more water conservation tips, visit saskatoon.ca/BeWaterWise.

For yard and garden tips, visit saskatoon.ca/HealthyYards.

For information about gardening in Saskatoon's public spaces, visit saskatoon.ca/PublicSpaceGardening.