Safer and Sustainable at Home
Virtual community-led workshops for sustainable homes and resilient neighborhoods

Xeriscaping on a Budget
Mary Gilkison and Keely Foster
Hosted by: Sustainable Green Mountain
Xeriscape or Zero Scape?
Xeriscape Principles

Planning

Soil Amendment

Practical Turf Areas

Plant Selection

Irrigation

Mulching

Maintenance

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Benefits of Sheet Mulching

• Reduces Difficult to Maintain/Water Turf Areas
• Less Back Breaking Work than Sod Removal
• Creates Less Waste
• Keeps Soil Profile and Microbes Intact
• Potential Cost Saving Options During the Process
DIY Sheet Mulching
Define Edges

Layout and Overlap Cardboard
Place Layer of Compost or Manure Over Cardboard Layer

Top with Organic Mulch
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Year 1 - Spring

Year 1 - Summer
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Before

After
Budget Tips

Cardboard Resources – NextDoor, SN Program, Buy Nothing Groups, Appliance or Bike Stores

Compost/Manure Resources – Home Compost, Alpaca Farms

Mulch Resources – City Mulch Program, Chip Drop from Tree Companies, Rent/Share a Chipper with Your Neighbors, Leaves and Pine Needles
Starter DIY Projects

Convert an Area that Sprinklers Can’t Reach

Install a Sidewalk Strip Bed
Starter DIY Projects

Create a Corner Bed for Herbs

Install a Mulch Pathway

Fill in a Scorch Strip with No Water Plants
Soil Testing and Amendment

**Adjusting Alkaline Soil:**
- Aged sawdust
- Wood chips
- Leaf mold
- Peat moss
- Cottonseed meal
- Pine needles
- Coffee grounds
- Fresh manure
- Oak leaves
- Ground up oak bark
- Pine needles

**Adjusting Acidic Soil:**
- Bonemeal
- Ground clamshells
- Ground eggshells
- Ground oyster shells
- Hardwood ashes
- Fine-ground agricultural lime: dolomitic lime (if the soil test reveals a magnesium deficiency) or calcitic lime (if the soil test reveals a calcium deficiency). The general guidelines for applying limestone to increase pH by one unit across 100 square feet: 3 pounds of sandy soil; 5 pounds on sandy-loam; 7 on loam; and 8 pounds on clay soil.
Soil Amendment

Compost

Fertilizer

Manure
Planting Techniques

Plant Root Ball

**DO** dig a hole that is wide and shallow.

Good depth to avoid crown rot.

Plenty of room for roots to spread out.

**DON'T** dig a deep, narrow planting hole.

Raising the plant up with loose soil may cause the plant to sink later.

Nowhere for the roots to grow.

Hori Hori
Watering and Maintenance

Signs of Water Stress

Weeds, Weeds, and Weeds
Self-Guided Xeriscape Tour

Kendrick Lake Park – Hoyt and Jewell
O’Kane Park – 1st and Pierce
Belmar Park – Behind Justice Center
Forsberg Park and Dog Park – Alameda/470
Medians Along Colfax and Kipling

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Design and Plant Selection

Garden in a Box

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Free and Cheap Plants

• Collect and Start Your Own Seeds
• Share Plant Divisions and Volunteers
• Start Plants from Root Cuttings
• Buy in Bulk with Neighbors
• End of Season Plant Sales
• Purchase Small Plants
Resources

General Xeriscaping

https://coloradowaterwise.org/XeriscapeColorado


https://northernwater.org/sf/water-efficiency
Resources

Sheet Mulching

Lakewood Wood Mulch Program

Plants and Design
https://plantselect.org/design/design-gallery/
https://resourcecentral.org/gardens/
Get Involved in Sustainability!

Find resources, view Lakewood’s Sustainability Plan, and more:
Lakewood.org/Sustainability

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Lakewood.org/SCOOP
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Sustainability@Lakewood.org

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