



GREEN T I P S



From Cato Environmental Services, Inc.

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Hi! Welcome to another addition of GREEN TIPS, I hope the advice from the last segment helped you in your gardening. We here at Cato Environmental Services, Inc. have received many comments and questions via email from the last segment. We thank you for your comments and support.

Well, as we all know, we just recently went through a period of drought, I thought it would be appropriate to discuss water management and xeriscaping. With the proper use of water and plant material, we can save money, time, and the environment.

First, I would like to start with xeriscaping. Xeriscaping is the use of native and similar zoned plants in the landscaping. When using native and similar zoned plants, the plant is at home in the soil that you plant it in. Once established, the plant will need little to no fertilization or water. So that equals fewer trips to the garden center for fertilizer, and less money on water and electric bills. Here are a few of my favorite xeriscaping plants; red fountain grass, lantana, cord grass, oleander, silver palmetto, muscadine grape vine, wax myrtle, slash pine, red maple, and loblolly bay. I recommend that you check your local garden center for other great xeriscaping plants.

In a perfect world, we would all have xeriscaping as our primary landscaping. Since we all have different tastes and styles, this will never be, but there is a way to use water in a way on our own landscape to reduce fungus, pests, and cost. The best way to find the perfect water schedule for your landscape is to water thoroughly the entire landscape, then turn off the irrigation system, check the landscape daily for stress (i.e. Wilting leaves). Once you have noticed the absolute need for water, turn on your system. Then, set your irrigation clock accordingly. I recommend that you do this monthly for three months. Thereafter, I suggest you do this quarterly or during extreme weather changes. This allows your landscape to receive just the amount of water it needs. Excess water produces fungus, weeds, disease, nutrient wash out and the waste of your water and electric bill.

The best formula I have come up with, is to try and stick with plants in the zone in which you are located. Use all other zoned plants as color spots and as sparingly as possible. You will find that you have fewer plants to replace as well as low maintenance and upkeep.

Thank you for taking the time to read GREEN TIPS and good luck in your gardening. We love to hear your questions and comments. Please call Brian Cato at 407-402-3005 or email catolandscap@yahoo.com.