

Outdoor Water Efficiency Begins with a Well-Designed Landscape

Here in the Valley, it is typical that much of our water use occurs outdoors and not inside the home. With such a significant amount of our water being used outside, it highlights the importance of being efficient with our outdoor water use, especially during a prolonged state of drought and in anticipation of a hotter and drier future.



The first place to start is with a well-designed, desert-adapted landscape because they are more than just picturesque - they can also help lower your water bill, save you time and money in upkeep, add value to your home or business even reduce your electricity use. However, knowing how to create a perfect landscape best suited to our arid climate can seem like a daunting task.

While we know water-efficient landscapes are essential in our conservation culture, they don't have to all be the same – adding your sense of style will make it your own and ensure your outdoor living space is everything you want while still being wise with your outdoor water use.

Proper planning is a must

When designing your landscape, planning should be a priority because a beautiful, functional yard begins with a great plan, yet many people do not know where to start when it comes to creating that outline. When designing your landscape, consider preferences, such as the look you want to achieve, how you will use your yard, the amount of time you want to spend taking care of your yard, and your budget as you develop your unique plan. There are resources and tips to help design, install and maintain your landscape on our [Xeriscaping: Landscaping with Style in the Arizona Desert](#).

Get some inspiration

We have numerous [resources](#) to offer some support, including a [photo gallery](#) and advice on [professional services](#) if you need some assistance. There are also suggested [places to visit](#) for inspiration, including xeriscape demonstration gardens in the AMWUA cities. In fact, you can even virtually tour some of them, including the [Glendale Xeriscape Demonstration Garden](#).

Pick the right plants

We know the desert offers a surprisingly diverse selection of low water use landscape plants and trees. Still, it can be an intimidating task to figure out how to utilize these plants to their full potential. To assist you with selecting the perfect plants for your yard, we have the ideal interactive resource for homeowners, businesses, and anyone looking for a little extra desert-

adapted flower power with the [Plants for the Arizona Desert](#) website. This searchable site will help take the guesswork out of finding the right plants, shrubs, and trees for your yard.

Now you are empowered with all the necessary information to ensure your yard is both stunning and sustainable. After all, with a bit of strategy and knowledge, it's easy to enjoy beauty and color in your desert yard all four seasons of the year while being responsible with the water we have.

NEXT WEEK: Understanding how to water effectively and appropriately to further reduce outdoor water use.

For over 50 years, the Arizona Municipal Water Users Association has helped protect our member cities' ability to provide assured, safe, and sustainable water supplies to their communities. For more information, visit www.amwua.org.