

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Choose warm-season grasses that require less water like bermudagrass and buffalograss.
- Know your soil texture. Sandy soils require lighter, more frequent watering while clayey soils need heavier, less frequent watering. Applying water faster than the soil can absorb it will cause water (and your money) to run off the landscape.
- To save water, do not over-seed warm-season lawns with cool-season grasses, since over-seeded yards require more water than dormant grass.
- Install a rain/freeze sensor to prevent water wasted in the landscape.
- Water before 10 a.m. to reduce water loss to evaporation which will reduce disease incidence from allowing water to sit on leaves overnight.
- If it's a windy day, skip watering. Watering in the wind causes needless water loss by moving water away from the lawn.
- Do not water hardscapes.
- Collect and use rainwater.
- Conduct an irrigation audit so you know how much water is being applied to the lawn during an irrigation event.
- If you have a clay soil, use the cycle and soak approach. Turn the water on until it begins to puddle, turn it off and after it soaks in turn the system back on. This allows water to deeply soak in the soil.
- Install a rain garden which allows water to infiltrate into the soil rather than runoff the property.
- Learn how to program your irrigation controller so you can update the programs with the changing of the seasons.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

SqueezeEveryDrop.com  
SIP.Mesonet.org  
ThinkWater.okstate.edu  
Turf.okstate.edu  
OSUFacts.okstate.edu

Oklahoma County Extension office  
405-713-1125  
OCES.okstate.edu/Oklahoma

For gardening questions contact the Oklahoma County Master Gardeners  
405-713-1125  
mastergardener.okstate.edu

## DONATIONS & SPONSORS

Oklahoma City Water Utilities Trust  
Spring Rain Irrigation Systems  
Irrigation Station  
Easton Sod  
Silver-Line Plastics  
Green Okie Pergolas and Outdoor  
Innovative Tree Care  
Eckroat Seed Company  
Minick Materials  
Bentley Turf Farms, Inc  
Redbud Design and Landscape, Inc.  
Midwest Brick & Block  
Turf Team Outdoor Management  
Havenyfield Tree Farm & Landscape  
Oklahoma State University-Oklahoma City  
Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service  
Oklahoma State University Department of  
Horticulture & Landscape Architecture

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Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Director of Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma. This publication is printed and issued by Oklahoma State University as authorized by the Vice President, Dean, and Director of the Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources and has been prepared and distributed at a cost of 2,440.00 for 30,000 copies. 1114 MG



Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service  
Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources  
Oklahoma State University

## DO YOUR PART TO SQUEEZE EVERY DROP

Oklahoma city residents use about 30 to 40 percent of their household water outdoors in the landscape. The seven principles of a water-wise landscape, or xeriscape, provide simple ways to reduce outdoor water use while maintaining an attractive lawn and garden.



Even though central Oklahoma receives about 35 inches of rain per year, the growing population and variable rainfall across the state creates a need to conserve water in the landscape.

The water conservation garden was provided by the Oklahoma City Water Utilities Trust. Oklahoma City saw a need to promote proper water use to the public in the midst of persistent drought conditions across the state. Oklahoma City residents receive water from six surface lakes. Oklahoma City owns four water supply lakes including Overholser, Hefner, Atoka and Draper and water rights in Lake Canton and McGee Creek Reservoir. Lakes Overholser, Hefner and Draper are within city limits. Atoka and McGee Creek Reservoirs are in southeast Oklahoma and Lake Canton is located in northwest Oklahoma. Making water-wise management decisions reduces water waste and helps support a healthy landscape.

Drought or not, lets work together to squeeze every drop.

## PRINCIPLES OF WATER EFFICIENT LANDSCAPES

### Landscape planning and design

Start with a good design before purchasing plants. Sketch out your property with considerations for slopes, soils, drainage, turf, sun exposure and recreation areas.

### Soil quality improvement

Assess your soil's quality. Many urban soils are compacted from construction activities so adding organic matter and aerating periodically increases soil water holding capacity, creating healthy plants. Always take a soil test before fertilizing the landscape. For information on soil testing go to [soiltesting.okstate.edu](http://soiltesting.okstate.edu) or visit your local Extension office.

### Turfgrass management

The water conservation garden showcases three warm-season grasses grown in Oklahoma; bermudagrass, zoysiagrass, and buffalograss. Bermudagrass and buffalograss only need about 1 inch of water or less per week. Instead of watering on a set schedule, water when the grass begins to show signs of wilt. If you can see your footprints when you walk across the yard, it's time to water. Water early in the morning to reduce water loss to evaporation.

### Plant selection and placement

Choose plants that are adapted to Oklahoma's climate. Always plan before you plant. Make sure you take mature plant heights, light requirements, and watering needs into account. For a list, visit [osufacts.okstate.edu](http://osufacts.okstate.edu) and search for E-1037. The Oklahoma County Extension office also has a water-wise plant list available.

### Mulch Cover

Mulch creates an attractive landscape, controls weeds, prevents erosion, and retains soil moisture. As organic mulches break down, they help alleviate soil compaction and provide a home for organisms like earthworms. Maintain a 2 to 4 inch mulch layer around plants and trees. Replace it as it breaks down or washes away.

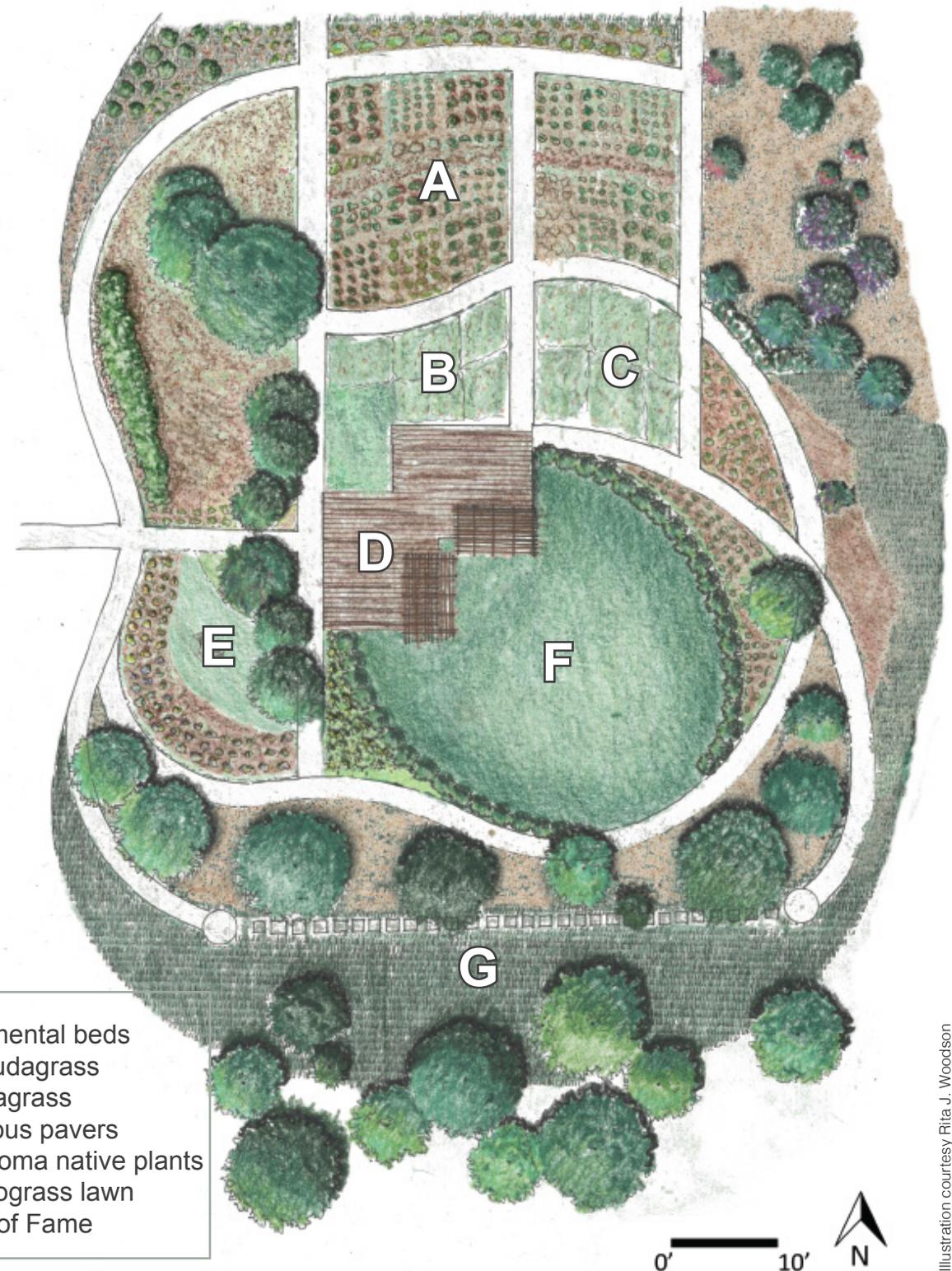
### Irrigation

Avoid over-watering and incorporate soaker hoses and drip irrigation for efficient watering. Conduct a simple irrigation audit or use [SIP.Mesonet.org](http://SIP.Mesonet.org) to determine how much water to apply. Water early in the morning to prevent evaporation. It's best to irrigate deeply and less frequently to encourage strong, healthy root growth.

### Proper maintenance

Periodically check irrigation systems and fix or replace broken sprinkler heads. Raise the mower height to reduce evaporation and check the soil before turning on water.

The OSU-OKC Water Conservation Demonstration is located southeast of the OSU-OKC John E. Kilpatrick Horticulture Center, 400 N. Portland Avenue. The garden is open daily during daylight hours and there is free parking available north of the Horticulture Center and west of the garden.



- A: Ornamental beds
- B: Bermudagrass
- C: Zoysiagrass
- D: Pervious pavers
- E: Oklahoma native plants
- F: Buffalograss lawn
- G: Walk of Fame