

How Does Your Garden Grow?...

TURN OFF THE TAP

Water is a resource too precious to waste. More and more cities are enacting watering bans or restrictions during the summer months when Environment Canada estimates that water use increases by 30 to 50 percent. By taking a few simple steps, you can ensure that your green garden conserves water and still looks beautiful.

- ❁ Enhance the water-retention capability of your garden's soil by digging in compost in spring, summer or fall. Not only will this organic matter improve your soil's texture and water-retention capabilities, it will also add important nutrients.
- ❁ Mulch your plants, shrubs and trees with a 3-inch layer of compost, shredded bark, straw or chopped leaves during the growing season. Make sure the mulch doesn't touch the base of the plant. The mulch layer will conserve moisture in the soil and prevent weeds from sprouting.
- ❁ When planting young seedlings, create a saucer-like area around the base of the plant so rainwater will be directed to the plant's root zone.
- ❁ If you live in an area with regular dry periods during the summer months, plant drought-tolerant species that thrive with no watering. A local nursery can help you choose drought-tolerant plants, many of which are prolific bloomers - an attractive bonus.
- ❁ Place plants with similar moisture needs together in the garden. This way, instead of watering the whole garden indiscriminately, you can water only those plants that need it.
- ❁ Install a rain barrel, connected to your downspout, so you can collect rain for garden use.
- ❁ Consider planting native species (see Info Sheet #6) as these plants are adapted to the climate and rainfall patterns in your region.

** If you have a lawn, see Info Sheet #7 for smart lawn-watering tips.*