

WATERWISE

Collect it Today, Use it Tomorrow!

Rainwater:

- Harvesting has been carried out by humans for over 5,000 years.
- Is one of the purest sources of water.
- Falls for free!
- Can be used for potable and non-potable use.
- Can green your landscape and lessen your environmental footprint.
- Promotes self-sufficiency and helps conserve existing water supplies.

Island-wide demand for clean water is growing while supply diminishes.

Water, too precious to waste.

When it comes to water use the average residence will use **40%** of its total annual water consumption within the landscape.

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ALBERNI-CLAYOQUOT
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Waterwise practices help reduce water usage in the landscape.

When applied to a landscape you'll see:

- Potable water supply quality and volume is preserved as less water is needed to support the landscape.
- Retaining water in the watershed or ground water will improve the surrounding ecosystem and provide a more resilient local forest ecology.
- Less water means less pumping (whether that is on a community system or well) which in turn leads to less energy use.
- Infrastructure will have less load during peak outdoor usage and will not need to be replaced or upgraded as quickly during periods of community growth.
- Improved landscape performance and yield.
- Reduced water costs.

Be proactive! Drought proof your landscape and lessen your worries about water restrictions.



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Waterwise practices

1

Plan or design outdoor space with water usage and passive water harvesting in mind.

Passive water harvesting is a simple method of taking water from any hard surface (roof, road, pathway or patio) and directing it into the landscape. When we apply passive rainwater harvesting techniques we 'slow it, spread it, sink it', and increase the opportunity for the water passing through a site to infiltrate the soil.

2

Improve existing soils structure and water holding capacity.

- Mulch between plants with a 2" layer of straw, grass clippings, compost, wood chips, or other organic matter to protect the soil surface from sunlight, wind, rainfall and subsequent erosion.
- Add a high quality compost to plantings to enhance and encourage the diversity of soil organisms. These are responsible for building soil structure and supplying plants with nutrients. By improving the organic matter content in landscape soils by just 1%, the average city lot increases the amount of water it holds or stores by an extra 5,200 litres of water! When in doubt, add compost and avoid using synthetic fertilizers which harm soil organisms.

3

Be selective of what plants are in your landscape.

Use drought tolerant plants that are suitable for our climate. Select plants that are at their best in warm dry summers, such as those of mediterranean origin or perennials like Artichoke, Russian Sage or Nepeta. When planning your planting areas, consider the individual plants water needs. Avoid placing dry loving and moisture loving plants next to each other, as one will end up being unhappy.

4

Avoid overhead irrigation and use drip or low flow irrigation where possible.

Improper irrigation techniques and equipment can significantly increase the amount of water you use in your landscape. Drip irrigation, micro spray nozzles and low flow nozzles can decrease your water usage by 30% while maintaining a good level of hydration close to your plants.

5

Make an assessment of your lawn areas, as these tend to be huge water consumers.

Look and see if there are other ground covers that could work as a great alternative. In an appropriate location, clover is an excellent example of a ground cover which requires very little care once it is established. With a bit of research we can break ourselves free of our strong ties with traditional turf grass.