

LANDSCAPE & SUSTAINABLE WATER USE GUIDE



Making Your Landscape Stormwater-Safe

Runoff is the flow of water from your property that doesn't get absorbed into the ground. When harmful substances like pesticides, fertilizer, and dirt are handled improperly, this water can pick them up on its way to the storm drain system where it flows untreated to our creeks, rivers, and ocean. There are simple actions you can take to collect runoff and use it on site to maintain your landscape and protect our water resources.

This guide will help you use rainwater as a resource to waste less water and keep your landscape stormwater-safe. Planting OC Garden Friendly plants, proper watering practices, and harvesting and using rainwater are terrific ways to beautify your landscape while protecting our water resources. Continue reading to learn how!

What Are OC Garden Friendly Plants?

OC Garden Friendly plants are either native or adapted to Orange County. Because they're accustomed to our climate, they require less water, pesticides, and fertilizer than other plants. These plants can be terrific assets to waste less water and keep our waterways healthy. Here are some beautiful OC Garden Friendly plants to add to your garden:

Groundcover

African daisy



Germander



Coral bells/
Allum root



Penstemon



Sage



Sundrops



Gaura



Heat and drought-tolerant groundcover with showy flowers.

Rock rose



Terrific groundcover for a dry garden whose colorful flowers blossom in the spring.

Perennial

Narrow-leaf
milkweed



Pine muhly grass



Douglas iris



Beach strawberry



Pumpkin monkey



Yellow monkey



Shrub

Baja fairy duster



Sea lavender



California fuchsia



Texas ranger



Pacific mist manzanita



Toyon



Westringia/Coast rosemary



Charming and fragrant evergreen shrub with lavender flowers which shine in the spring.

Tree

Desert museum
palo verde



Attractive tree with bright flowers appearing in mid-spring and leaves that shed each winter. Water deeply once or twice a month in the summer to promote flowering.

Marina madrone



Shiny evergreen leaves with drooping flower clusters followed by berries lasting into late winter. Plant if you want to see hummingbirds!

Desert willow



Where to Use Them:



Note: For new or rehabilitated landscape projects greater than 500 sq. ft., it is mandatory to follow the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELO) standards for landscape design and installation. These are a set of minimum standards to be followed. Check with your local city for specific requirements.



Scan to learn more:
<https://water.ca.gov/Programs/Water-Use-And-Efficiency/Urban-Water-Use-Efficiency/Model-Water-Efficient-Landscape-Ordinance>

For more information regarding how to create a sustainable landscape please visit the UCCE Master Gardeners of Orange County website: <https://mgorange.ucanr.edu>.

Photos credited to GardenSoft Corp. – **Left Page:** Coral bells/Allum root, Sage, Penstemon, Gaura, Rock rose, Douglas iris, Pumpkin monkey, Pine muhly grass, Beach strawberry, Yellow monkey, Baja fairy duster, Pacific mist manzanita, Toyon, Westringia/Coast rosemary, Desert museum palo verde, Marina madrone, and Desert willow. **Right Page:** All photos.

Sustainable Water Use Best Practices

Watering

Proper irrigation practices are critical to protect Orange County's water bodies.

- Utilize smart irrigation controllers and, and/or soil moisture sensors. These can help manage your garden's water needs to waste less water.
- Take advantage of a drip irrigation system to directly water plant roots. This reduces water loss and runoff.
- Install rotating sprinkler nozzles to spread water more uniformly across your landscape.

Rainwater Collection and Use

In Orange County, 60%-70% of water is used for irrigation and other outdoor uses. Collecting and using rainwater are great ways to decrease water usage.

- Direct downspouts to flow towards vegetated areas to reduce runoff and use a splash block to prevent erosion.
- Install a rain barrel to collect rainwater from roofs and use for landscape irrigation. Make sure it has a screen, spigot to siphon water for use and an overflow tube.
- Build a rain garden using OC Garden Friendly plants and other landscape materials.

Rebates

Beautify your landscape in stormwater-safe ways by utilizing rebates from your local water district or the Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC). Save money on water-efficient devices like smart irrigation controllers, high-efficiency nozzles, soil moisture sensors, and drip irrigation systems. Also, upgrade your landscape with their conversion rebates to replace turf with OC Garden Friendly plants. These rebates can change frequently, so check with your local water agency and MWDOC (mwdoc.com/rebates) regularly.



THANK YOU FOR PROTECTING OUR WATERWAYS BY
CREATING AN OC GARDEN FRIENDLY LANDSCAPE.



Learn more at our Overwatering is Out webpage by scanning the QR code or visiting:
h2oc.org/resources/take-action/overwatering-is-out.

WHO IS H₂OC?

H₂OC is YOU! H₂OC is also a cooperative stormwater program which includes all 34 cities in Orange County, the County of Orange, and Orange County Flood Control District (OCFCD). Clean and healthy beaches, creeks, rivers, bays, wetlands, and ocean are important to Orange County. H₂OC provides resources to residents and businesses to encourage personal action and prevent polluted runoff from entering our waterways.

JOIN US

Visit h2oc.org to learn more about runoff, water pollution, and how you can be the solution to runoff pollution and protect our water resources!

CONTACT

 **24-hour Pollution Reporting Hotline:**
1-877-89-SPILL (1-877-897-7455)

 **24-hour Reporting Website:**
myOCeServices.ocgov.com

For emergencies, dial 911