

## GREENING YOUR GARDEN

The idea of going green is gaining momentum. What better place to really go green than in your garden? Here are some helpful, green garden tips:



**COMPOST!** Rather than put your kitchen vegetable waste down the garbage disposal or the waste basket – add it to a compost bin. Compost puts nutrients back into your soil, and helps with aeration and water retention in your garden. There are numerous books and how-to articles online about composting.



**PLANT a VEGETABLE or FRUIT GARDEN!** The space you set aside for a vegetable garden means less lawn that has to be fertilized, watered and mown. You'll save some of your hard-earned dollars that would normally be spent on store-bought produce. And nothing tastes better than summer-ripened vegetables you pick fresh from the vine.



**WATER CONSERVATION:** Catch rain water in a rain barrel, and use that to water your plants (or even wash your car). It's chlorine/mineral free. You'll see a drop in your water bill, too. Make sure to place a screen on top of the barrel to keep the bugs and leaves out. And use that water – don't just let it sit – we don't want to farm mosquitoes. Use mulch in your planting beds – it helps with water retention. Water in the cool morning, when more of those precious drops will be absorbed by your plants and not just dried up by the sun. Weed often; those pesky weeds vie with your plants for water.

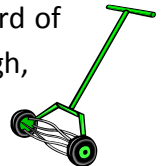


**INVITE THE BIRDS & BEES & BUTTERFLIES:** Keep pesticide free, and you'll enjoy visits from "good" insects like butterflies and bees that help pollinate your plants. Other good insects include the green lacewing, lady bug and praying mantis – these eat bad bugs, a natural pesticide plan. Having a wide variety of plans in your garden will help attract the friendly insects, but also most garden pests have a limited range of plants on which they feed.



**USE "HOME-GROWN" PLANTS:** Using native or indigenous plants in your landscape is a great idea. Since they are already adapted to local conditions, they are that much easier to care for and see thrive!

**A GREENER LAWN** – Find the recommended height for the grass in your yard. Mow early in the day, but after the dew has dried. Mow often – grasses stay healthier by removing only one-third of new growth at a time. Use grass clippings in your compost. If your lawn is small enough, consider using a reel lawn mower – no fuel smell, it's quieter, totally eco-friendly, and you may get more exercise, too!



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