

Xeriscaping Guidelines

Approval is required for all external changes to homes or landscaping.

Xeriscaping can be a way of reducing water usage for landscape; however, it still requires some amount of watering for a healthy, good-looking garden. Xeriscaping is based on an idea that organizes high- and low- water-use plants to maximize watering efficiency and create a landscape that's sustainable in our dry climate.

There are several components to a good xeriscape design that should be considered: plant zones, planting material, soil amendment, irrigation efficiency, mulching, and maintenance. Since xeriscaping is complex, it requires expertise to design a garden well. The HOA strongly recommends hiring a landscape architect for the best result.

The HOA has compiled some specific guidelines to keep in mind as you plan your xeriscape garden.

- At least 50% of the softscape yard area to be affected must be natural grass and an additional 30% of the area must be organic plant material. Only 20% may be mulch or rock.
- Trees, shrubs and perennial plantings should be sufficient to cover the majority of the xeriscaped area.
- Plant material should relate to the scale and character used within our community and part of the plant material should be evergreen for some visual attraction in winter months.
- Mulch may be wood chips or rock. Rock mulch should be ¾"-1 ½" with larger cobblestone used only as accent or in drainage areas. Gorilla hair wood mulch is not allowed in areas bigger than 2 feet circumference.
- Use of edging as a barrier to separate various areas such as rock from wood mulch or to separate from neighbor's property.
- Large sparse expanses of rock or mulch beds are not acceptable.
- Hardscape such as flagstone pathways and large boulders should be used sparingly as accents within the design. Hardscape can add a lot of heat to the surrounding area and therefore cannot exceed than 20% of total yard.
- Xeriscaped gardens must be maintained in an attractive manner.
- Mulch should be refreshed annually so no weed barrier is visible.
- Artificial turf may only be considered for back yards. See artificial turf guidelines.

Detailed plans in scale with detail on the types of plant material and mulch must be submitted with the "Request for Architectural Change" application along with photos of the house and yard.

For some basic information on xeriscaping visit the Denver Water and Colorado Extension Service websites.