Water Smart Landscaping

How to Maintain Your Native Landscape

Benefits of Native Landscaping

- Improves Water Quality
  - Prevents soil erosion
  - Reduces flooding and
  - Increases water infiltration into the soil
- Helps Wildlife
  - Provide shelter and food
  - Attract beneficial pollinators
- Time and Resource Saver
  - Requires minimal watering
  - Requires little to no fertilizers or pesticides

Mulching

- Spread on the soil surface to maintain soil moisture, shade the soil, and prevent weed seeds from germinating
- Organic mulches break down over time and help improve soil structure (includes compost, shredded leaves, pine needles, and fine-textured shredded bark chips)
- Spread a 2-3 inch layer of mulch over your weed-free bed after planting your native plants. This should only be necessary for the first few years.

Weed Control

- The best weed control is making sure your planting bed is weed-free before you plant. Add mulch to suppress weed growth.
- During the first few years, inspect for weeds weekly during the growing season and hand-pull as necessary. Once established, you can decrease the inspection frequency.
- Space plants closely to create a canopy that will shade out weed seeds and keep them from germinating.

Grooming

- Deadheading is a term used for removing flowers after they have faded. Be aware of if the species you plant will benefit from deadheading or not.
- Cutting back is a practice used to keep some plants more compact and keep taller plants from folding over. Know your plant species and consult a plant guide before determining if cutting back is appropriate.
- Divide vigorous plants with a shovel to keep plants from overtaking other species in your garden.
- Remove thatch, last year's dead plant material, in the spring once it has been 50 degrees consistently. Leave standing dead thatch through winter to provide habitat and food.

Avoid:

- Fertilizers - Native plants are adapted to their soils and environment and do not require fertilization.
- Pesticides - Native plants are naturally resistant to native pests.

Recommended Timing of Typical Maintenance Activities:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Mulch (First Few Years)				✓								
Weekly Watering (First 1-2 Years)				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Weed Control				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	