



Top 10 Green Landscaping

for you and the

Chesapeake Bay

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1

Plant Native Landscaping: Native plants are acclimated to a region's climate. Therefore these types of plants require less water and most likely are resistant to regional vegetative pests. Consult with a local nursery to determine which native plants are best for your yard. The following website contains a list of native plants for Maryland and Virginia.

Resource: <http://www.plantnative.org/rpl-mdvawv.htm>

2

Use Non-toxic Fertilizers: When synthetic fertilizers are used, these compounds, typically some form of nitrogen, phosphorous, and potassium can seep into ground water and drain into storm sewers. The Chesapeake Bay Foundation states 11% of nitrogen pollution in the Bay comes from urban and suburban storm water runoff. Excessive nitrogen and phosphorous causes algae growth to intensify which is detrimental to organisms and fish. In lieu of toxic fertilizers, consider using these alternatives such as compost, grass clippings, or natural ingredients.

Resource: <http://www.omri.org/simple-opl-search/results/fertilizer>

3

Reduce Chemical Pesticide Use: Chemical pesticides used in the garden contain toxic ingredients which are harmful to humans. If these toxic chemicals leach into the ground water, both our drinking water and surrounding bodies of water, such as the Chesapeake Bay, are at risk. To avoid exposure to these chemicals and reduce ground water pollution, consider using natural alternatives such as garlic, microbial pesticides, or even lady bugs!

Resource: <http://www.helpfulgardener.com/organic/2006/insects.html>

4

Harvest Rainwater: Rainwater can be collected by installing rain barrels at the end of your downspout. Collected rain water can be used to irrigate your landscaping. Not only will harvesting rainwater reduce your water bills, it also reduces storm water runoff and decreases the impact on your municipality's water supply and storm sewer system.

Resource: <http://alexandriava.gov/tes/oeq/info/default.aspx?id=24014>

5

Plant a Rain Garden: Rain gardens are small shallow depressions which are planted with deep rooted vegetation. Rain gardens are used to act as natural filters and further reduce storm water runoff from your roof. If you are considering building a rain garden consult this detailed guide:

Resource: <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/wm/dsfm/shore/documents/rgmanual.pdf>

6

Use Efficient Irrigation: The EPA states on average households in America use a total of 29 billion gallons of water a year to irrigate our yards. Our consumption of water can be reduced if the following tips are followed: (a) Irrigate your lawn and plants during the hours of 4-7am (b) only water when necessary and understand how much water each plant needs (c) consider using drip irrigation for your vegetable gardens or planting beds.

Resource: http://www.epa.gov/WaterSense/outdoor/watering_tips.html

7

Plant Shade Trees: Virginia is known for hot humid summers and requires air conditioning to cool your home. To help reduce your energy bill, deciduous trees can be planted to act as a natural sun shade for your south facing windows. When trees are first transplanted they will need a good amount of water to stabilize its roots and will benefit from high quality of water. Consult with a local nursery to help select the best tree for your yard.

Resource: http://www.energysavers.gov/your_home/landscaping/index.cfm/mytopic=11940

8

Compost your Landscape Waste: Vegetable and fruit scraps, coffee grounds, egg shells, grass clippings, dried leaves, or pine needles are excellent ingredients for composting. Successful composting requires attention to moisture content, nitrogen/carbon ratio, and oxygen levels. Once this organic mixture turns into a dark and earthy matter it is ready to be re-used as a natural fertilizer for your garden. Composting bins can either be bought from a local garden center or from www.composters.com.

Resource: <http://pubs.ext.vt.edu/426/426-703/426-703.pdf>

9

Mulch your garden: Mulching is the act of spreading an organic mixture over exposed soil. This organic mixture could include bark, grass clippings, compost, or even straw. Mulching is beneficial to the garden since it retains the soil's moisture and temperature, reduces weeds, and protects the soil from erosion. Mulch can be purchased at a local garden store or could be made from your own composted landscape waste.

Resource: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/feature/backyard/mulching.html>

10

Use non-gas powered equipment: Gas powered gardening equipment, such as lawn mowers and leaf blowers, can cause both air and noise pollution. Before using your gas powered equipment, decide if it is necessary and determine if manual raking or sweeping can do the job. If you decide to replace your gas powered equipment consider purchasing electric and/or battery powered items. For small lawn areas also consider purchasing a manual push mower.

Resource: <http://www.peoplepoweredmachines.com/faq-environment.htm>

Additional Resources:

<http://www.alexandriava.gov/gbrc/>

<http://alexandriava.gov/EcoCityChallenge>

<http://www.epa.gov/osw/consERVE/rrr/greenscapes/owners.htm>

<http://www.chesapeakebay.net/inyourbackyard.aspx?menuitem=16888>

<http://www.cbf.org/Page.aspx?pid=1136>



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