

# What Is Xeriscaping ?

*“When the well is dry, we know the worth of water.” – Benjamin Franklin*



**Xeriscaping** refers to landscaping and gardening in ways that reduce or eliminate the need for supplemental water from irrigation. The central idea behind xeriscaping involves choosing proper plants. Instead of using more water-thirsty plants such as lawns and exotics, plants that are both native and drought tolerant can be used in order to reduce the water requirement that would be needed

for irrigation. The late '70s saw the emergence of xeriscaping, a landscaping ideology that is practiced in parts of the United States, particularly in the drought-prone areas of the southwest.

Though every zone will lend itself to different plants, examples of wise xeriscaping plant choices include:

- Succulents
- Rock garden plantings
- Native wildflowers
- Ornamental Grasses

In addition to helping conserve municipal freshwater supplies, xeriscaping also helps homeowners reduce their water bill each month.



This increasingly popular water-conscious effort is not a movement that strives to entirely eradicate traditional lawns but rather encourage homeowners and developers to at least consider the reduction of lawn areas in favor of swaths of native, drought tolerant plants, stone and gravels and alternative groundcover. Furthermore, it should be stressed that xeriscaping does not connote sacrificing aesthetics for function. Many combinations of flowering perennials and ornamental grasses are just as beautiful as an Azalea and Rhododendron garden...and often last much longer throughout the growing seasons.

Visit the **RDA/RSLA Landscape Architects** website at [www.retnauer-design.com](http://www.retnauer-design.com) to learn more about xeriscaping and how this concept can be applied to almost any site design.