

YOUR GARDEN

Plan A Garden Makeover For Seasonal Savings

(NAPSA)—Designing your garden to conserve water can help weed out one cause of high utility bills.

Advance planning can save homeowners hundreds and even thousands of gallons of water during the growing season. Here are a few tips for a water-saving garden makeover from the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA).

- **Start early.** Plan ahead so that all new plantings take place in the spring. Plants require much less water to get situated when they are planted during the cooler months.

- **Go native.** When deciding what to install in your yard, consider native and drought-resistant plants. They typically require less maintenance and little watering once established (sometimes none at all).

- **Must mulch.** Use compost when planting and cover the area with mulch afterwards. Compost helps keep the water by the plant's roots and mulch prevents evaporation. Make sure to leave some space around the base of each plant and resist creating mulch mounds around plants and trees.

- **Less lawn.** The average American uses 200 gallons per day watering the lawn. Consider replacing some of that grass with an attractive ground cover that is drought resistant, covers a large area and requires no mowing.

- **Supersoak.** Up to a third of all water from sprinklers can



Saving water in your garden may be as simple as following a few tips from landscape architects.

evaporate during the heat of the day. Instead, give your plants fewer, heavy soakings. If you use sprinklers, only use them in the morning.

- **Gray is good.** Recapturing gray water or rainwater can provide a free source of garden irrigation. These systems can be easily installed and even incorporated into irrigation systems.

- **Drip. Drip. Drip.** Drip irrigation systems water plants right at the root and serve as an efficient alternative to sprinkler systems. For maximum effectiveness, be sure to get a timer.

To learn more about reducing utility bills through landscape design or to find a landscape architect, visit www.asla.org.