Water Conservation Guidelines

Tempe encourages projects that not only beautify and enhance shared spaces but also increase the efficiency of water usage. Those considering projects that may meet water conservation criteria are encouraged to meet with Tempe Water Conservation staff. Projects that may be considered include: landscape conversions from grass to desert lush, smart irrigation controller upgrades, or high-efficiency sprinkler head or nozzle upgrades. The Tempe Water Conservation program provides additional funds to the Maryanne Corder Neighborhood Grant Program. Therefore, high quality applications that also meet water conservation criteria may have a higher chance of receiving funding. The maximum amount available through the grant program is $15,000.

All landscape projects must be processed through Community Development and are subject to existing codes and review processes. Consult with planning staff prior to developing detailed plans to ensure you understand the requirements before you invest your time and effort.

Water Conservation Project Criteria

- Projects must implement a clear water conservation Best Management Practice (BMP) as defined by the Arizona Department of Water Resources and also clearly demonstrate water savings.
- HOAs and multi-housing communities seeking to increase landscape watering efficiency must participate in the free HOA Water Budgeting Program, This program provides a monthly email estimating efficient water usage.
- Water efficiency products installed – including sprinkler heads, nozzles, smart irrigation controllers – must be certified by the EPA and hold the WaterSense Label.
- HOAs and multi-family housing communities are encouraged to have board members/property managers registered on the free WaterSmart Portal (tempe.gov/watersmart), which provides water usage charts and potential leak detection.
- Be sure that projects that seek to convert from grass to desert lush landscapes have the support of community members. For a list of desert-friendly landscape plants, visit amwua.org/plants or request a catalog from staff.
- Include, in the narrative, a description of how the project meets the above water conservation criteria.

Process:

1. Call/meet with Community Development and Water Conservation staff to discuss project and criteria
2. Submit Project Submittal Plan along with landscape plan to Community Development for Preliminary Site Plan Review – as soon as possible – to allow for revisions that might impact bids
3. Community Development staff will return plan with comments for revisions
4. Applicant makes revisions and then submits along with the neighborhood grant application

Community Development landscaping contact: Steve_Abrahamson@tempe.gov; 480-350-8359
Water Conservation contact: Tina_Sleeper@tempe.gov; 480-350-2668