



## Choosing & Placing Plants

- ❁ Select plants native or adapted to our West Texas climate. They do not require as much fertilizer, pesticides and water as poorly adapted plants. (See Plant Suggestions in this brochure.)
- ❁ Select primarily drought-tolerant plants and group them according to their water needs.
- ❁ Plan and plant your plants according to their mature height and spread. Leave enough room between plants to allow for growth and good air circulation to prevent disease.
- ❁ Match plants to the site. Plant shade loving plants in the shade, sun loving plants in the sun.
- ❁ Lawn grass is a water, fertilizer and pesticide guzzler. Reduce your lawn areas with more landscape and plant beds and paths, decks, and patio areas to save water, labor and chemicals.
- ❁ Plant deciduous trees (those that shed their leaves in winter) on the southern and western sides of your home to allow the sun to help heat in the winter. The returning leaves will shade in the summer and help cool the house.
- ❁ Design your yard with plenty of shade, especially on the south and west. This will save on water for plants and grass that are cooled by the shade.

### Additional Resource

**Texas Department of Transportation**

[www.dot.state.tx.us](http://www.dot.state.tx.us)



Russian Sage

## Saving Water in Your Landscape

- ❁ Use porous materials (mulch, gravel, pavers on sand base, stepping stones) instead of concrete or other solid surfaces where possible. Porous materials allow water to soak in rather than run off your property.
- ❁ Use mulch—lots of it. A 3"-4" layer of organic mulch, such as shredded tree limbs, shredded bark, or other materials, reduces water evaporation. It also enriches the soil and deters weeds.
- ❁ Design lawn or beds with a slight depression between drive and walks to catch rainfall rather than it being lost as runoff in street or other areas unavailable for use.

## Customize Your Irrigation

- ❁ Group higher water-use plants together and near a water source. Low water-use plants can be grouped and situated further away from water and in less accessible sites.
- ❁ Select sprinklers that throw a larger droplet of water close to the ground to reduce water loss due to evaporation and wind drift.
- ❁ Drip irrigation is best for planting beds because it waters slowly and near the roots.
- ❁ Do not rely on automatic settings for sprinkler systems. Set each station according to the water needs of your various plant groupings. Water as needed.
- ❁ Use your index finger to test the soil for a lack of moisture. Apply 1 inch of water which will wet the soil 6 inches deep in clay soil and 12 inches deep in sandy soil or prepared garden soil. Water less often but deep enough to wet the root zone.
- ❁ Install a sprinkler system that automatically shuts off when it rains.
- ❁ Water trees at the drip line not at the trunk. The drip line is an imaginary circle on the ground representing the full size of the crown, or leafy area, of your tree where the roots take up water.
- ❁ Get a soil sample kit from the Texas Cooperative Extension. It's easy and can save you money. You can improve your soil with organic matter and save water.