



## WaterSmart Plant List for the Sacramento Region

Very Low, Low, Moderate Water-Use Definitions



This **Plant List** contains some of the most common **very low, low, and moderate water-use plants** found in the Sacramento region. This list is intended as a tool to participants in rebate and incentive programs for calculating the living plant coverage requirement (oftentimes a minimum of 50% plant coverage) for the converted area. Refer to the rebate or incentive program for which you are an applicant for specific program requirements and to determine if you must use plants only from this list or if you can use plants from this list and plants that are not on this list. Use of drought-tolerant plants, low-water-use plants, and California plant species native to this region is highly encouraged.

Information on this list is provided as a public service and is not to be considered an endorsement of plant material, products, or services, nor is the information a substitute for the exercise of sound judgment. Refer to the Resources and References section for sources of information for this list.

### Plant Coverage & Size

#### Plant Coverage Value

The Plant Coverage Value in square feet is for each plant at its **mature width**; it is the value that will be used by Program Administrators to determine the canopy coverage regardless of the size of the plant at the time of planting and/or inspection.

NOTE: Tree canopy will not be used to determine the 50% plant coverage requirement for Placer County Water Agency's Lawn Replacement Rebate Program.

Coverage value was determined by multiplying the diameter (mature width) of the plant's canopy by .7854. Example:  $.7854 \times 5 \text{ ft. diameter} \times 5 \text{ ft. diameter} = 20$ . Totals under .5, were rounded down to the next whole number. Totals above .5, were rounded up to the next whole number.

Where a plant's width is expressed in a range, for example, 20-30' Wide (W), the middle of the width range was used, which in this example is 25' W.

#### Shrub Sizes

Shrubs have been grouped into the categories of large, medium, and small based on their **mature height**.

Shrubs - Large 6 - 15 feet tall at maturity

Shrubs - Medium 4 - 6 feet tall at maturity

Shrubs - Small 4 feet or less at maturity

### Water

#### Plant Water Requirements

Plant water requirements were obtained from WUCOLS IV, Water Use Classification of Landscape Species, Fourth Edition, CA Department of Water Resources, Regents of the University of California, California Center for Urban Horticulture, 2014, except where noted. Sacramento is in Region 2, the Central Valley.

Cultivars, with some exceptions, may not have been included in WUCOLS because it is presumed that many cultivars have the same water requirements as the species.

Generally, no supplemental irrigation is required during the rainy season. During unusually dry fall and winter seasons, supplemental irrigation may be needed. All newly installed plants need frequent watering, at least every two to three days during warm temperatures. Even drought-tolerant and low-water-use plants need regular water and monitoring at first to ensure that the soil does not dry out completely and plants are not wilting. After a few weeks, watering may be decreased to two times a week. Water until weather cools and rains begin. Plant water requirements and frequency of supplemental irrigation can vary depending on specific soil type as well as weather and site conditions.



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### Very Low, Low, Moderate Water-Use Definitions



#### Water Requirement Codes

Description applies to established plants, not newly installed plants.

VL - Very Low

Plants that require deep, supplemental irrigation once a month during the dry season to those that require no additional irrigation once established and during years of average rainfall in the Sacramento region.

L - Low

Plants that require deep, supplemental irrigation every two to three weeks during the dry season, once established.

M - Moderate

Plants that require deep, supplemental irrigation once a week during the dry season, once established.

WNA

WUCOLS Not Applicable because plant is not listed in WUCOLS. Water Requirement Code based on resources, references, and horticulturalists' experience.

#### Hydrozones

Hydrozoning is a key component of a water-efficient irrigation system and landscape.

Hydrozoning is defined as the grouping of plants that have similar water needs on one irrigation valve zone.

Factors that determine hydrozones include infiltration rate of water into the soil, soil type, slope, sun exposure, and water needs of the plants. (Infiltration rate is the rate at which water is applied to the soil without causing runoff.)

Hydrozones divide a landscape irrigation system based upon individual plant water requirements, level of maturity, and planting density.

Each hydrozone should be served by a valve or control zone separate from others, using only one type of sprinkler or emitter throughout the zone.

Each hydrozone will contain plants that will be irrigated on the same schedule, using the same irrigation method. For example, plant material irrigated by low-volume, multi-stream sprinklers with rotary- or precision-type nozzles will be on a separate schedule and valve from plant material irrigated by low-volume drip emitters.

#### Exposure (Sun)

In addition to grouping plants according to their water requirements (hydrozones), plants within each zone need to have the same solar (sun) requirement.

For example: Plants that have low-water-use requirements and prefer full sun should be grouped together and irrigated on the same valve or zone (a valve separate from other zones). Plants with moderate-water-use requirements and prefer part sun should be grouped together and irrigated on a separate valve or zone.

#### Climate Zone

Based on "The New Sunset Western Garden Book" Climate Zones, which takes into consideration temperature, latitude, elevation, ocean influence, and other factors in determining climate zones. If a Sunset Climate Zone was not available for a plant, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Zone, which is based on minimum temperatures, was used and converted to the approximate Sunset Climate Zone.

#### Uses/Benefits

The letter "Y" in the columns noted as Drought Tolerant, CA Native, Deer Resistant, UC All-Star, and/or Rain Garden indicates that "Yes" that plant may be appropriate for this use or benefit.