

1. Be Fire Safe

Practice the Three R's:



Remove • Reduce • Replace

Create a “clean and green” defensible space zone for 30 feet around any buildings. Remove “ladder fuels,” branches, limbs and brush 8-10 feet above ground. Reduce the number of shrubs and trees in the space from 30 feet to 100 feet or to the property line to create a reduced fuel zone. Replace fire prone vegetation with green islands and fire breaks.

2. Right Plant - Right Place

- When selecting new plants or considering the replacement of old ones, work to match the plant with the area, placing "the right plant in the right place."
- The foothills climate is one of wet, cool winters with hot, dry summers. Choose natives and Mediterranean-adapted plants.
- Trees, shrubs, and perennials are best planted in the fall so they can become established before facing our summer heat.

3. Water Efficiently & Effectively

Consider replacing turf with low-water use plants or reduce the size of your lawn. To determine lawn irrigation times you first need to determine your sprinkler output. Set out six or more straight-sided containers of the same type, spaced evenly on your lawn. Empty tuna cans, cat food cans or coffee mugs work well. Run the sprinklers for 20 minutes and use a ruler to measure (in inches) the depth of water in each can. Determine the average depth of the containers and then multiply by three to determine the inches of water your sprinkler system applies per hour.

The table below shows the total run time per week you should apply based on the sprinkler output. For example if your sprinkler output is 1.5 inches per hour, you need to run your sprinkler for 73 minutes each week in June. For lawns in the foothills, watering 3 times per week is adequate. Dividing 73 by 3, this system would run 24 minutes per irrigation.

Month	0.5 in.	1.0 in.	1.5 in.	2.0 in.
Apr	134	67	45	34
May	176	88	59	44
June	218	109	73	55
July	227	113	76	57
Aug	193	97	64	48
Sept	151	76	50	38
Oct.	92	46	31	23

4. Feed the Soil

Composting is as simple as piling leaves in a corner of the backyard and letting them decompose. By adding kitchen waste, grass clippings and chopped shrub prunings, you can create a rich soil additive at no cost. Composting also reduces the amount of green waste that is often sent to the land fill.

Many different types of composting containers are available, from simple, circular, wire enclosures to permanent three-bin systems. Consider grass-cycling, allowing your mowed grass clippings to stay on the lawn. Grass clippings add the equivalent of one nitrogen feeding per year, thus preventing fertilizer run-off and saving money.

5. Recycle

Tuolumne County Solid Waste Division is working hard to improve our recycling programs. Waste Management, 14959 Camage Avenue, Sonora, CA will pay for accepted recycled materials; local garbage haulers offer curbside recycling collection. Call 209.533.5588 for details.



6. Garden for Wildlife

WATER: Our hills become almost desert dry in the summer. A pond or birdbath attracts an amazing variety of birds; pans of water on the ground also help frogs, lizards, and toads through the dry stretch.

PESTICIDE FUNDAMENTALS: A yard safe for wildlife is a yard with little or no pesticides.

PLACES TO LIVE: Animals need a place to hide and to raise young. A layer of mulch, trees, shrubs, old tree snags, ponds, brush piles, bird and bat houses, and open ground are all home to some sort of wildlife.

PLANTSCAPING: Lawns provide little food or cover for animals. Landscape with plants native to our area; many are drought and deer tolerant. Look for plants that provide seeds and berries as well as nectar and pollen-producing flowers for bees and other pollinators. If you have oak trees, treasure and protect them.

LEARN MORE: The National Wildlife Federation (NWF) certifies wildlife-friendly yards nationwide including many in the foothills. Learn more at:
<http://www.nwf.org/backyard/>

7. Manage Pests Responsibly

Integrated pest management (IPM) is the practice of using less toxic techniques to control pests and diseases. Visit the Integrated Pest Management website to learn more:

www.ipm.ucdavis.edu

Some levels of insect damage can be tolerated. Keeping plants healthy is the best way to achieve a balance that will reduce pests.

8. Preserve Our Native Oaks

Our native oaks can be hundreds of years old and are a wildlife bonanza providing acorns, insects, cover, and nesting spots. These oaks are subject to root fungus if watered during the warm months. To keep your oaks healthy, do not water or plant under their drip line and do not dig or compact the soil under them.

Measure from the trunk to the edge of the dripline (where the shadow of the leaves falls when the sun is directly overhead). Add half that measurement again to the width of the dripline. This is the Tree Protection Zone (TPZ).

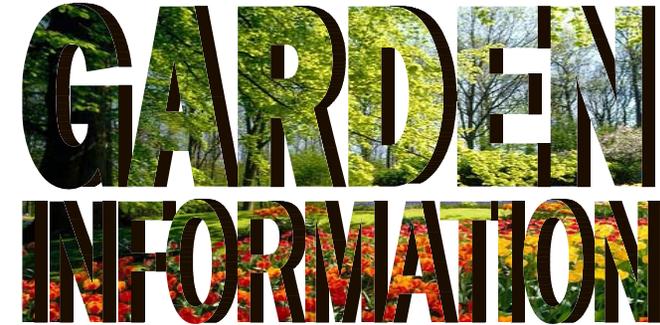
Do not cut the roots or trench within the TPZ. Don't add or remove soil or change the slope. Establish areas within the TPZ without irrigation or fertilizer.

To learn more about creating and maintaining attractive, healthy landscapes that protect California's natural resources, contact:

**Tuolumne County Master Gardeners:
209-533-5912
<http://cetuumlumne.ucdavis.edu>
mgtuumlumne@ucdavis.edu**

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FOOTHILL-FRIENDLY GARDENING In Your Garden and Landscape

