

Stress Management for a Drought-stricken Garden
Stephanie Duer, Water Conservation Coordinator
Salt Lake City Department of Public Utilities

We all know it's hot and dry; no weathercaster needs to tell us. Just look at our yards: the lawns are golden and parched; the annuals just don't have any zip; and even some trees are looking tattered. Water is a precious commodity and while we don't want to waste it, we also don't want to see our gardens shrivel and die before our eyes. But don't despair; here is a list of tricks to keep things cool in the garden without wasting water:

- Don't worry about the lawn; dormant bluegrass requires only 1 to 1.5 inches of water every two weeks to stay alive; dormant tall fescue requires 1 inch every two weeks.
- Allow the lawn to grow taller, between 3 to 5 inches. Taller grass shades the soil, reducing evaporation and conserving moisture, and taller grass tends to have deeper roots, helping grass to survive longer periods without water.
- Only water the trees, shrubs, and perennials that show signs of stress, which include limp or curled, and dull colored foliage.
- Apply a 3 to 4-inch layer of mulch to trees, shrubs, and flowers.
- Newly planted trees and shrubs, those planted within the last three years, need two to five gallons of water once to twice a week; new perennials need a gallon once to twice a week.



Mow high



Mulch perennials and shrubs



Hand water plants that look stressed

By taking these simple steps you can keep your garden healthy and beautiful and help to save water for our children and their gardens.

Stephanie Duer
801.483.6860
stephanie.duer@ci.slc.ut.us