

## TEN RULES TO ACHIEVE A WATERWISE GARDEN

- 1) Analyze your site – Conduct a site analysis and develop a plot plan that indicates the wet and dry areas, sunny and shady areas, as well as other pertinent environmental and physical properties of your land.
- 2) Get a soil test and improve your soil - Testing is provided in NC by Department of Agronomy/Soil Testing Section [www.ncagr.com/agronomi/sthome.htm](http://www.ncagr.com/agronomi/sthome.htm) . Soil improvement typically includes the application of lime and organic material as well as other nutrients in the form of organic fertilizer.
- 3) Design your WaterWise Garden with your family's needs being met as well as including both the functional and aesthetic qualities you desire.
- 4) Choose drought tolerant plants - use the right plant-right place approach by listing your requirements for each plant before making a trip to the nursery. Insure success with a three inch layer of organic mulch.
- 5) Water efficiently and know how and when to water – Choose the best watering method for each area of your property and water when it is cool and windless.
- 6) Purchase a rain gauge and monitor your rainfall – a plant's water needs vary with lawns typically needing one inch rain or equivalent each week during its growing period. Individual plants are best watered by hand held hose.
- 7) Collect rain water by rain barrel, cistern or by shaping the topography of your property to slow or catch rainwater.
- 8) Choose alternative groundcovers to replace or reduce unneeded lawn areas and choose turf types that meet your needs.
- 9) Monitor the results of your waterwise garden – check on your plants regularly to manage their overall appearance and health. It typically takes one to two years for a plant to acclimate to where it is truly drought tolerant.
- 10) Maintain your WaterWise Garden including proper fertilization, pruning, mulching, pest and disease control.