Mulching/Grasscycling

About

Mulch is used to protect precious topsoil and inhibit weed growth by covering the areas in landscapes where the soil is exposed. As the organic matter in the mulch decays, the released nutrients feed the plants and beneficial microbes in the soil.

Mulch is typically a loose, fibrous material. The mulch must allow rain and irrigation water to reach the plant roots.

Different Types of Mulches

- Wood chips
- Fallen leaves
- Grass clippings
- Compost

Benefits of Mulching

- Prevents erosion
- Suppresses weeds
- Retains soil moisture
- Cools the soil in the summer and warms the soil in the winter
- Reduces fertilizer demand as the mulch adds soil nutrients as it breaks down
- Saves diminishing landfill space

To use mulch, apply a 3 to 6 inch layer around trees, shrubs, and within garden beds. It is not recommended to pile the mulch up against tree trunks.

Don't Bag it! Participating in a "Don't Bag It" program or "Grasscycling" means leaving the grass clippings on your lawn after each mowing. These grass clippings enrich your lawn with important nutrients and reduces the demand on diminishing landfill space.

Street Sweeping

The City of Azle is committed to removing trash and debris from nearby waterways and to providing clean water for generations to come. By sweeping curb and gutter streets quarterly, many solid pollutants are removed and properly disposed of before they enter into the creeks and lakes. Debris carries fertilizers and insecticides into the water. The debris that does make it into the water forms the sediment that is also detrimental to our lakes. Although leaves are natural, if left to decompose on streets and sidewalks, they can wash into storm drains and eventually into Azle's lakes and streams. Leaves and nutrients over-fertilize lake water and encourage harmful aquatic plants and algae to thrive. This results in undesirable water for swimming and fishing and is harmful to wildlife.

We ask residents to help by removing their vehicles, basketball backboards and trash cans during street sweeping. Moving your car off the street on sweep day is very important. Leaving a car parked on the street means that an area of almost 3 car lengths will be left upswept. Street sweepers remove harmful pollutants from the streets once each quarter, but debris collects daily.

The City of Azle appreciates your patience and cooperation.

Please contact the Storm Water Manager at (817) 444-4511 if you have any questions or concerns.

City of Azle
Community & Opportunity

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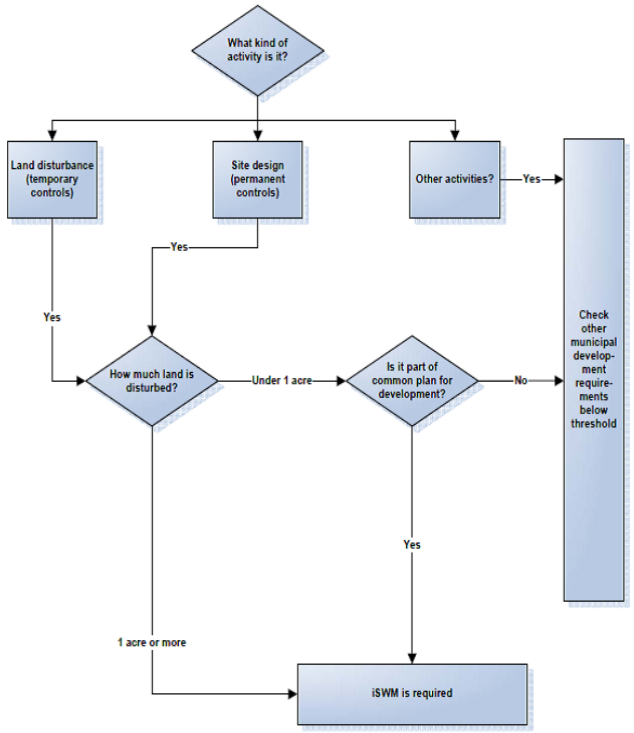
City of Azle
Community & Opportunity

Storm Water Pollution Solutions

Texas SmartScape®is a collaboration of the North Central Texas Council of Governments, Tarrant County Health Department; Texas Extension Service – Tarrant County, Tarrant Regional Water District, Texas Parks & Wildlife, Weston Gardens and the City of Lubbock.

Does iSWM Apply to My Project?



Overview of the iSWM Program

The iSWM Program for Construction and Development is a cooperative initiative that assists municipalities and counties to achieve their goals of water quality protection, streambank protection, and flood mitigation, while also helping communities meet their construction and post-construction obligations under state stormwater permits. Development and redevelopment by their nature increase the amount of imperviousness in our surrounding environment. This increased imperviousness translates into loss of natural areas, more sources for pollution in runoff, and heightened flooding risks. To help mitigate these impacts, more than 60 local governments are cooperating to proactively create sound stormwater management guidance for the region through the *integrated* Stormwater Management (iSWM) Program.

Watering & Conservation Guide

First, know if the City has watering restrictions in place by checking the City website: ***www.cityofazle.org***. Remember the water you use to irrigate your landscape is also your family's drinking water supply.

TIPS FOR LAWNS

- Know when your lawn needs water by careful observation, not simply because you have a set schedule or an automatic sprinkler system. Symptoms that indicate you may need to water your lawn include:
- Grass leaves (blades) turn a dull, bluish color
- Leaf blades of the grass begin rolling or folding
- When you walk on the grass you leave foot prints for an extended period of time
- Maintain a deep, infrequent watering schedule. This approach is best for the overall health of the lawn. It allows your grass to develop deep root systems, reduces disease, helps insure good air movement down to the root system, and conserves water.
- St. Augustine grass usually needs water every 5-7 days. This promotes good root growth and should provide the amount of water the plants require.
- Bermuda grass can go 7-8 days between watering if maintained properly.

TIPS FOR MAINTAINING MOISTURE

- If you plan to install new landscaping, prepare your beds now with plenty of mulch.
- Use at least 3" - 6" of organic mulch in all flower, shrub and garden bed areas to reduce watering frequency.
- Leave grass clippings on the lawn to help maintain moisture.
- Water trees separately by placing a soaker hose under the outer ring of branches and let the hose drip for several hours, as needed.
- Daily drip irrigation or hand watering may be needed for some containerized plants.

Texas SmartScape is a landscape program that promotes the use of plants suited to North Central Texas's soil, climate, and precipitation. The regional goal is to improve water quality by reducing runoff and to conserve local water supplies by selecting ecologically appropriate native or adapted plants that require less water, pesticides, fertilizers, and herbicide. For more information, visit ***www.txsmartscape.com.***

Watering & Conservation Guide

DRAINAGE & DOWNSPOUTS

Whenever practical, direct roof drains to lawns and gardens instead of concrete driveways or sidewalks. There are two benefits to directing roof drains to lawns and gardens. One benefit is water conservation, since some of the runoff soaks into the lawn and garden instead of flowing to the street. The second benefit is reducing or eliminating pollution in urban runoff. When roof runoff soaks into the ground, materials (sediments, nitrogen, etc.) are trapped in the soil instead of ending up in a lake or river.

DRAINAGE

Plants in your landscape must have both air and water around their roots. Good soil drainage provides both in the root zone. Poor drainage typically results in excess water (waterlogged) and little air around the roots. This causes the plant to suffocate, wilt and die over time.

Carefully evaluate the drainage of the area to be planted. If a site does not drain, it will not support healthy plants. Poorly drained soil is responsible for more plant failure than any other single cause. One way to check the percolation of the soil is to dig a hole approximately 2 feet deep and fill it with water. Let the water drain away and then refill the hole. If the water drains away twice within an hour, the soil is well drained and will support most any plant that insists on impeccable drainage. (e.g., Calylophus). If the water drains within 6 hours, it is suitable for plants that will accept heavy soil (e.g. Canna, Flame Acanthus). If water stands beyond six hours-consider building a raised bed or install a subsurface French drainage system (perforated pvc pipe in a gravel bed), or planting plants that tolerate poor drainage.

COLLECTING AND USING RAINWATER

Downspouts can easily be diverted into a rain barrel to store rainwater. A rain barrel collects and stores stormwater runoff from rooftops that would otherwise be lost to runoff and diverted to storm drains and streams. By capturing and temporarily holding water, rain barrels help add capacity to the city's sewer system and reduce sewer overflows to creeks, rivers, lakes, and other water sources. The collected rain water can be used for irrigation to water lawns, gardens, flower beds, and trees, or even car or window washing. Rain barrels can be purchased at some local home improvement stores, on-line, or they can be easily and cheaply built with readily available materials. Best of all, once it is set up you have a free supply of water for your garden!

Using rainwater has numerous benefits over using city water, or tap water. Rainwater is considered "soft water," meaning it contains no chlorine, lime, or calcium, (often found in tap water) which can be detrimental to plants over time.