

RainScapes Rewards

Conservation Landscape Establishment



Congratulations on installing your new conservation landscape! You've taken the first step in managing stormwater runoff. Follow this guidance to take the next steps in keeping your conservation landscape looking good and working optimally.

During the first two to three years, it is especially important to follow a regular maintenance schedule. A well-designed conservation landscape will need minimal care once established.

Don't forget to apply for your Water Quality Protection Charge credit! See details on back.

Know Your Plants

- Take photos after the plants are first installed and label plants to help with plant identification.
- Learn which plants are supposed to be there and which aren't.

Weed Early and Often

- Pull weeds regularly by their roots to keep them from spreading. Remove weeds before they go to seed.
- Never use herbicides or pesticides in the conservation landscape.
- Plan for seasonal weeding. Summer weeds appear mid-summer to early fall. Winter weeds appear from winter into early spring.
- Get to know what your local invasive plants look like. Refer to: [Montgomery County Invasives of Concern](#).

Replenish Mulch

- A newly planted conservation landscape has 2 inches of mulch. Check the mulch depth and loosen it every spring and fall, and always check the existing depth of mulch before adding more. Less mulch will be needed over time as plants fill in.
- Do not pile mulch on plant stems.
- A densely-planted conservation landscape may require little if any mulch as the plants grow in and cover the ground, often in 2-3 years.

Care for Your Plants

- To work properly, a conservation landscape should have dense coverage of groundcover plants across its entirety.
- If plants die, determine why. You may need to replace the plants with other selections, or you may need to change how you maintain the plants.
- Cut back ornamental grasses & perennials, & remove fallen leaves in late winter. Consult the [Resources](#) page of the [RainScapes website](#) for helpful plant information.
- Periodically thin shrub stems to shape and encourage fuller growth.
- Do not fertilize the plants in your conservation landscape.
- Some perennials may require dividing every three years to maintain size and promote vigor. Water well after dividing.

QUESTIONS? Call 311 / Email RainScapes@MontgomeryCountyMD.gov / Visit RainScapes.org

Water Your Garden

- When first planted, and during the first week after installation, water plants every day or every other day. For the next 2 weeks, water every other day. For the next 6 weeks, water 2-3 times per week.
- For the first summer, water once or twice a week depending on how dry it is.
- For the second summer, water once every week or two, depending upon how dry the weather is.
- By the third summer, plants should need no more watering unless there's more than 3 weeks of drought.

Address Storm Damage

- Check for signs of soil erosion after large rain events, such as areas of bare soil, exposed roots around the base of plants, or channels caused by concentrated runoff, and repair as needed.
- Rake mulch back into place and reposition rock used for checkdams that has moved around or repair breaches in soil micro berms.
- Do not pile snow in a conservation landscape.
- After the snow has melted, remove large branches or other debris.

Seasonal Tips

- Mulch once in spring and again in fall as needed.
- Remove fallen leaves in the fall.
- Prune shrubs in late fall or early spring as needed.
- Cut back perennials in late winter or early spring.
- Replace dead or diseased plants in spring and early summer. Some plant species are slow to break dormancy in spring so give them time to respond before assuming they are dead.

Establishment Phase Monthly Schedule

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Monitoring				x				x	x	x	x	
Pruning		x	x	x								
Cutting Back Perennials		x	x									
Watering					x	x	x	x	x	x		
Edging					x			x				
Weeding	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
Mulching				x								
Leaf Removal			x									x
Winter Weed Removal		x	x									

APPLY FOR YOUR WATER QUALITY PROTECTION CHARGE CREDIT!

For property owners like you who are managing stormwater runoff and properly maintaining your projects, this annual credit on your property tax bill is a win-win for you and the County. You save on your tax bill and it helps the County meet local and State stormwater management requirements.



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Visit MontgomeryCountyMD.gov/water/WQPC
to learn more and apply!



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