

TIPS FOR HOMEOWNERS

on Working with HOAs To Create a Water-Efficient Landscape



Creating a water-efficient landscape is an excellent way to conserve resources, reduce maintenance, and enhance curb appeal. When you live in an HOA community, a successful project begins with preparation, good communication, and an understanding of both HOA expectations and state protections. The following tips from LCRA can help you navigate the process smoothly.

Review Your HOA's Rules and Guidelines

Before starting any landscape project, carefully review your HOA's Covenants, Conditions & Restrictions (CC&Rs) and any landscape guidelines. These documents outline what is allowed and what requires approval. Pay close attention to:

- Approved plant lists or plant restrictions
- Irrigation system requirements
- Color, style and material specifications for mulch, rock or edging
- Turf limitations or turf removal requirements

If anything is unclear, reach out to your HOA or property manager for clarification. They may also have sample applications or examples of approved past projects.

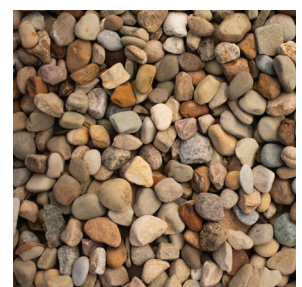
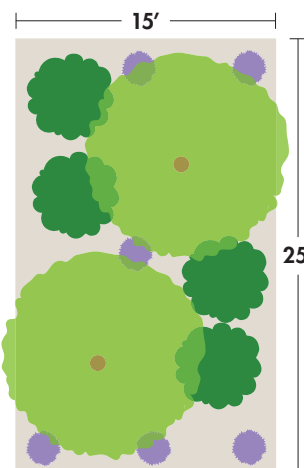
Important note: Under [Texas Property Code 202.007](#), HOAs cannot prohibit water-conserving landscape practices. However, they can regulate the aesthetic appearance.

Create a Clear and Complete Landscape Plan

If your HOA requires approval, a well-organized landscape plan can help the process go more smoothly. Your plan should ideally include:

- Plant list with names, coverage, and color
- Materials – mulch type, rock color, edging, etc.
- Simple layout showing plant placement
- Irrigation system changes such as removal of unnecessary spray heads
- Estimated timeline for project completion
- Maintenance plan to show long-term upkeep
- Reason for the conversion

Providing visual examples can help the HOA better understand your vision. If you don't have neighborhood examples, you can use inspiration photos from online landscaping resources. If applying for an LCRA or water provider rebate, make sure your design meets the program's eligibility requirements.



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Communicate Early and Often

- Working with an HOA is smoother when you are proactive and collaborative.
- Start the conversation early. Discuss your intentions before submitting the formal application.
- Be flexible. The review process can take time, and the committee may request modifications.
- Expect ongoing communication. After submitting your proposal, be available for follow-up questions or clarifications.
- Prepare for questions or concerns. If your HOA is hesitant, be ready to explain how your design maintains neighborhood appearance while reducing water use.

In case of opposition, be familiar with Texas Property Code 202.007 and House Bill 517, which support residents' ability to install water-efficient landscaping. While HOAs can guide aesthetics, they cannot prohibit conservation-focused practices.

Maintain Your Landscape to HOA Standards

Regular maintenance not only keeps your yard looking great, it also builds trust with the HOA and supports long-term water savings. A strong maintenance routine should include:

- Replenishing mulch annually to maintain appearance and retain moisture
- Aerating turf grass to keep it healthy
- Top-dressing turf with quality compost to improve soil quality and reduce irrigation needs
- Trimming and shaping plants to keep the landscape tidy

Get Involved if You Want to Influence Policy

- Attend board meetings regularly to voice your opinions on policies and guidelines
- Join the landscape committee
- Run for a position on the HOA board
- Educate community members on conservation landscaping

