

WISHING YOU A "GREEN" NEW YEAR!!

The Bismarck Plant Materials Center staff would like to express our appreciation for your interest and valuable assistance throughout the year with field plantings, workshops, tours, training, seed collection, and data collection on off-center evaluation plantings. We offer the following seven plantscaping recommendations for the homeowner to consider in the New Year to conserve water and energy, and help make this a more environmentally sustainable planet for everybody!

- ✓ Convert 50% of your bluegrass lawn to reduced maintenance grasses, flowers, trees, and shrubs. Analyze the site and place plants according to their needs.
- ✓ Avoid planting turf in areas that are hard to mow such as steep inclines and narrow strips along driveways and sidewalks.
- ✓ Use a layer of organic mulch around plants to reduce evaporation and save hundreds of gallons of water a year. Mulch out to the drip-line whenever possible.
- ✓ Water your plants deeply but less frequently to create healthier and stronger landscapes. Consider a rain garden to capture water that would otherwise run off.
- ✓ Define mowing zones in the yard and avoid mowing everything every weekend. Leave the grass longer in areas not frequently used. Mix in wildflowers for color, interest, and wildlife. Don't mow the ditches!
- ✓ Next time you replace a flower or shrub, choose a low water use plant for year-round landscape color and save up to 550 gallons per year.
- ✓ Leave lower branches on trees and shrubs and allow leaf litter to accumulate on top of the soil. This keeps the soil cooler and reduces evaporation.

(Some recommendations taken from the *Water – Use It Wisely* web site.)

“More than 24 million acres of suburbia are planted in lawn. Each year \$7.5 billion are spent on the care of that lawn, including more than 67 million pounds of pesticides. In addition, the average lawn requires 10,000 gallons of water over the course of a summer to keep it that emerald green so many continue to covet.”

Stevie Daniels, 1995, *The Wild Lawn Handbook*

“Lawns are unnatural by their very design because they are composed of non-native grasses fertilized and stimulated into hypergrowth, then cut short weekly. A power mower to mow your lawn will emit more exhaust in half an hour than a car driven 187 miles.”

**Greg Horn, 2006,
*Living Green***

Related References for Your Winter Reading

- Armitage's Native Plants, Allan Armitage, 2006, 451 pages
- Landscaping with Native Plants of Minnesota, Lynn Steiner, 2005, 192 pages
- The Prairie Winterscape, Barbara Kam, et. al., 2003, 184 pages
- Gardening with Prairie Plants, Sally Wasowski, 2002, 285 pages
- 100 Easy to Grow Native Plants, Lorraine Johnson, 1999, 160 pages
- Dry-Land Gardening, Jennifer Bennet, 1998, 176 pages
- Grow Wild, Lorraine Johnson, 1998, 154 pages
- Xeriscape Plant Guide, Denver Water, 1998, 184 pages
- Creating the Prairie Xeriscape, Sara Williams, 1997, 247 pages
- Easy Care Native Plants, Patricia Taylor, 1996, 325 pages
- Landscaping with Native Trees, Guy Sternburg, et. al., 1995, 288 pages