

Watering Restrictions and Bans



As the weather turns unseasonably warm, landscapes in Colorado are seeing severe drought conditions. We have not seen a drought this bad in the past seventy years. The result has been many towns and cities in Colorado have enacted watering restrictions and even bans. In some cases, the shortage of water is so critical that if they don't get the water (snow and rain) soon, by next year they will be out of water.

Compost is emerging as the hero of water conservation. 'Compost is the key to what we're doing here' . . ." [Battery Park City Parks Conservancy, New York City] "If you have organic matter, you don't have to water as much." The New York Times, Anne Raver, April 14, 2002



A drought emergency is no time to panic. It is time to take steps that reduce water usage.

Compost is an effective water conservation tool. Soils in Colorado typically have only 1 percent organics. Adding just 1 inch of **BioComp®** or **Premium 3®** compost when planting a new lawn, flowerbed, trees, or shrubs will increase the organic material in the soil and, thus, also increase its water holding capacity. One percent of organic matter holds 35 to 40 pounds of water. Increase the organic matter to five percent and it will hold from 175 to 200 pounds of water, releasing it slowly back into the soil." (*University of Iowa Study—1 cubic foot of soil.*)

Top dressing your existing lawn with compost is yet another way to conserve water. By top dressing just ¼ inch deep with **Premium 3®**, this layer of compost slows the evaporation of water from the surface. It also provides nutrients that will not leach into the ground water and contains a host of beneficial microbes and fungi for the health of the plants and soil.

Mulch is a functional way of reducing water usage. A two to three inch layer of A1's **Second Chance®** organic mulch slows evaporation and water runoff. As an added bonus, it adds organic mater to the soil as it breaks down.

Beyond the use of compost and mulch, there are some common sense ways to conserve water. Water early in the morning when it is cool and water doesn't evaporate as quickly. Water less frequently but apply more water, thereby encouraging the roots to grow deeper.

Finally, water the soil and not the plants!



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