

We don't "sell" water conservation

Often when our design team steps on to a property that we're renovating, we see broken irrigation heads, water over spraying onto hard surfaces and running into the gutter. Clocks are set to water during the heat of the day and water too long in one cycle. When we also see vast amounts of turf, it tells us little thought was put into creating an outdoor living space or colorful garden that would add beauty, bring people outdoors and also save water.

The challenge is to make water conservation our client's new way of thinking, a lifestyle shift and not a trend. By implementing the GreenCo Best Management Practices (BMPs) and thoughtful design in our landscapes we can do our part, as vital players in the Colorado Water Plan, to conserve water and shrink the 500,000 acre-feet water supply gap predicted for Colorado by 2050.


What this means is we don't just "sell" water conservation. We continually educate our clients about the different ways to conserve water and we don't get much push back; they want to do their part. They hire us to be their trusted professionals and advisors. Up-front planning is critical and implementing in



Photo courtesy: Lifescape Colorado

phases over time can be cost effective for most clients. It's not an all-or-nothing proposition and every little bit contributes to the reduction of water use whether it's proper irrigation zoning, appropriate head selection and head to head coverage, hydrozoning, upgrading to smart controllers, installing rain sensors, soil prep, plant selection or proper mulching.

As green industry professionals, it's our responsibility to educate ourselves and apply these best practices for the clients we serve. We can help them see beyond green grass and show them creative, responsible and resourceful ways to better manage water use, which could include reducing unnecessary turf and irrigation zones and instead creating beautiful outdoor living spaces and gardens to enjoy.

Whether it's a commercial space or a backyard, it's our challenge as professionals to think outside the box while not short-cutting BMPs. Only by creatively working together with our clients can we reduce the municipal water demands by 2050. 

—By LeAnn Ostheimer, Lifescape Colorado, Denver, an ALCC Sustainable Landscape Partner

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