



SPRING SWAPS – A GUIDE TO ECO-FRIENDLY GARDENING

Spring weather is coming! As the weather warms and you're spending more time in your garden, make the switch to more eco-friendly gardening methods. Try a DIY method with ingredients from your very own kitchen instead of using yard chemicals. Grow native plants like blue flax, California poppies or coyote mint. Native plants are easier to keep alive and thriving, and contribute to our ecosystems by feeding local birds and insects. Even watering methods can be made more eco-friendly!

Swap Yard Chemicals for Greener Options

Pesticides linger! Traditional yard chemicals enter our storm drain through runoff, traveling untreated to our local creeks. Many kitchen staples can be used to combat garden pests with little environmental repercussions, like using apple cider vinegar to tackle ants, coffee grounds to deter snails, a mix of vinegar, salt and dish soap to kill weeds, or a teaspoon of Dawn dish soap to a spray bottle to kill aphids.

Bring Back the Natives!

Don't think you have a green thumb? Try growing native plants! Native plants like blue flax require less water and support our County's native insects and birds by providing nectar for local pollinators. Once native plants are established, they have little to no need for chemical fertilizers, pesticides, or other products to thrive. For a guide to native plants in Contra Costa County, check out <https://www.anniesannuals.com/plants/lists/?list=california-native-plants>.

Switch to Drip

No more overwatering your lawn or accidentally watering cement – drip irrigation is a water-efficient option that can be adapted to any landscape! Drip irrigation is a great way to make sure your plants get water right where they need it – at the roots. You can set a timer or a smart irrigation system, which automatically adjusts watering schedules based on actual weather conditions. Learn all about your drip options at <https://www.ccwater.com/164/Drip-Irrigation-Maintenance>.

This spring, you can make little changes in your garden that make a big impact. Learn more ways to make green swaps in your garden at <https://www.cccleanwater.org/community/home-garden>.