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The Best 12 Ways to Save Water During the Driest Time of the Year

OREM - The back half of summer tends to have a lot of warm temperatures, people making the most of the sun before school starts again, and generally some pretty dry spots in your lawn.

If you're looking to keep your yard looking good well into the fall and to save on your water bill, check out these 12 ideas you may not have thought of from the Central Utah Water Conservancy District on how to accomplish both and make your yard the pinnacle of your neighborhood.

1. Adjust your lawn mower to clip at three inches, and try to not cut off more than one-third of the grass height.
2. Apply as little fertilizer to your lawn as possible. Excess fertilizer increases water consumption, and will create more mowing work for you. You can try iron-based fertilizers to simply "green-up" your lawn instead.
3. Don't bag up your grass clippings as you mow. The clippings break down quickly and return nutrients to the soil as well as shielding the soil from evaporation.
4. Use a thick layer of mulch around landscape plants and in your gardens. Thick mulch reduces evaporation, promotes plant growth, and reduces weeds.
5. Water brown spots on the lawn with a hose, rather than increasing the sprinkler time.
6. When you see a brown spot in your lawn, don't overreact and drown the area in water. Simply moisten it up a bit, and the grass will green up in a few days.
7. Instead of washing your car in the driveway, use a commercial car wash. Those locations often recycle the water, and have shut off nozzles that save water.
8. Not all brown spots come from lack of water. Some distinct, irregularly-shaped brown spots that appear in late summer could be from a bug problem. Your local nursery can help you diagnose a bigger issue.
9. Collect any runoff from your roof in a barrel, bucket, or container and use it on your plants and garden.
10. Visually inspect your sprinkler system once a month during daylight hours. Check and fix any tilted, clogged or broken heads. Although watering at night is the most recommended, it means you won't notice any problems.
11. Build a deck. You can limit the size of your lawn by adding a deck, patio, or even a walkway. This can also add to the time you enjoy spending in your yard.
12. Do not water your lawn on windy days because more water is lost to evaporation.

For other great ideas on water conservation and ways to beautify your yard, you can check out the Central Utah Gardens in Orem for free classes and landscaping ideas. <http://centralutahgardens.org/>

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