

Climate-Conscious Gardening Checklist

Choose low-emission garden practices and products to minimize your carbon footprint:

- ✓ Use electric or human powered tools, such as push mowers, hand clippers, or rakes
- ✓ Install high-efficiency LED bulbs, automatic light timers, and solar-powered products
- ✓ Avoid fossil fuel-based fertilizers, pesticides, and peat-based potting mixes

Manage water wisely to deal with drought and flood conditions:

- ✓ Use drought-resistant plants in dry areas & create rain gardens where water collects
- ✓ Monitor rain gauges and adjust watering schedule accordingly
- ✓ Use soaker hoses and drip irrigation to reduce water consumption
- ✓ Install rain barrels and cisterns to capture rainwater
- ✓ Install permeable pavers to reduce stormwater runoff and increase absorption
- ✓ Investigate dry wells, terracing, and infiltration trenches, if necessary, to handle flooding

Build your soil to reduce erosion and grow healthier plants:

- ✓ Retain fall leaves on site to protect soil and overwintering beneficial insects
- ✓ Compost kitchen and garden waste and add to soil
- ✓ Disturb soil as little as possible to avoid release of CO₂ and prevent new weed growth
- ✓ Use leaf mulch or use plants as green mulch to cover bare soil

Think differently about your lawn:

- ✓ Reduce lawn area that needs maintenance
- ✓ Discontinue use of polluting fertilizers and pesticides
- ✓ Retain grass clippings as natural mulch
- ✓ Recognize natural growth cycles of grass and discontinue excessive watering
- ✓ Use alternative ground covers, including no-mow grasses and sedges

Make informed choices of plants:

- ✓ Remove and do not buy invasive plants, such as English ivy, Periwinkle, and Nandina
- ✓ Avoid or consider replacing high-maintenance, disease-prone plants
- ✓ Plant trees to increase cooling and shade buildings
- ✓ Incorporate native plants to support diminishing pollinator and bird populations

For More Information:

Refer to the website for Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia (mgnv.org) for helpful resources:

- Fact sheets and videos on Tried & True Native Plants of the Mid-Atlantic
- Fact sheets on Best Bets for Dry, Wet, Pollinators, Cover Crops
- Fact sheets on Invasive Plants & Native Alternatives
- Articles on best gardening practices
- Videos of public education presentations