Benefits of Mulch

DROUGHT SURVIVAL 101

CITY of NAPA

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The Benefits of Mulch

- Mulching is essential to the survival of your landscape during a drought. Mulch will reduce the amount of water that evaporates from your soil, greatly reducing your need to water your plants.
- Mulch improves the quality of your soil by breaking up clay and allowing better water and air movement through the soil. Mulch provides nutrients to sandy soil and improves its ability to hold water.
- Mulch acts as an insulating layer on top of soil, keeping it cooler in the summer. Roots like that!
- Mulch keeps weeds down, and the weeds that do grow are much easier to pull. Gardeners like that!

Mulch Like You Mean It

- Before applying mulch, remove weeds and water thoroughly. This will help you get the most benefit from your new mulch.
- Replace the grass under trees with mulch to minimize competition for water and nutrients. This mimics the way trees grow in nature.
- Keep mulch 6-to-12 inches away from the base of trees and shrubs.
- Apply 2-to-4 inches of mulch in all planting areas. Finer mulches (sized a half-inch or smaller) should be applied no more than 2 inches deep. Courser mulches, such as large bark chips, can be applied 4 inches deep.

Shopping for Mulch

Mulch is available by the bag or in bulk. Bulk mulch is measured in cubic yards. You can calculate the volume of mulch you need by multiplying the area (in square feet) by the depth (fraction of foot, not inches), then dividing by 27. The following table will guide you:

Cubic Yards Needed for Depth of Mulch

Square Footage	2″	3″	4″
200	1	2	2.5
500	3	5	6
1000	6	9	12
1500	9	14	19
2000	12	19	25