

February 6th, 2022

Dear DCS Customers,

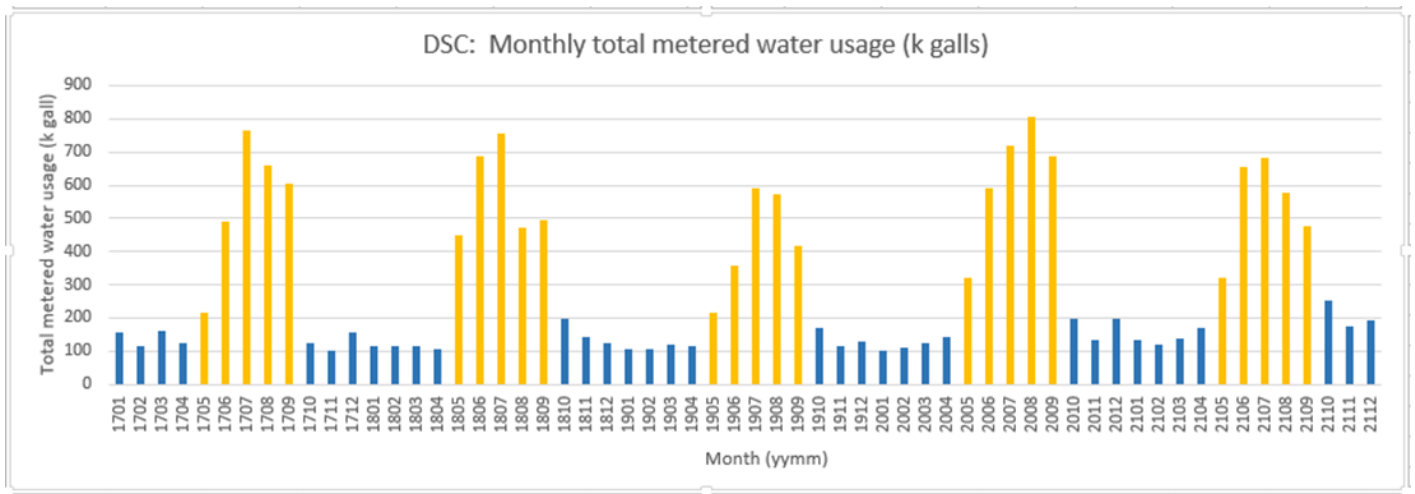
As winter wears on, we're looking forward to emerging greenery, both perennials from the past and new landscaping this spring. Proactive planting means being mindful of our prolonged and very possibly permanent drought and the impact of outdoor irrigation on our water supply. The extreme drought of recent years - and particularly this past summer - has left soil in this region so dry that it will absorb an exceptional amount before allowing water to penetrate into the deep aquifer that DSC taps. So I'm taking this opportunity to promote xeriscaping, and our regional experts say it best.

What is xeriscaping? *Denver Water* tells us: "Xeriscape landscaping promotes water efficiency by using plants that are native and adaptable to Colorado's semi-arid climate. Denver Water coined the word in 1981 by combining "landscape" and the Greek word "xeros," which means dry." Click on this link to visit Denver Water's excellent website on the principles and how-tos of xeriscaping: <https://www.denverwater.org/residential/rebates-and-conservation-tips/remodel-your-yard/xeriscape-plans>

Why xeriscape around your home? It's simple: savings, sustainability, eye-appeal, and higher property values – all for less effort!

atHome Colorado tells us: "Lower Maintenance Means Higher Offers: Less is often more for today's buyers. When you're choosing outdoor upgrades, stick to [low-maintenance landscaping](#). Native plants and hardy native grasses thrive in our dry climate. And they require less upkeep than species from other areas... Native flowers and hardscaping features will give you an enviable yard that needs little care. When it comes time to put your home on the market, your low-maintenance choices both in and outside the house will mean a faster sale and higher selling price." (<https://www.athomecolorado.com/home-and-garden/colorado-lawn-and-garden/landscaping-trends-that-increase-the-value-colorado-homes/>)

Demands on our aquifer: The graph below (courtesy of Ken Clark) shows water demands by DSC customers over the past 5 years, with the outdoor irrigation season highlighted (yellow). Reducing outdoor water use provides our biggest opportunity for conservation, helping assure a continuous water supply for the future. Professional landscapers often set automatic watering systems higher than needed, so please emphasize to them the need for conservation, including watering at night to reduce evaporation.



Would you like more expert advice? Following are additional resources kindly provided by Todd Hagenbuch, our County Agricultural Agent:

A great overview of general Xeriscaping: <https://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/yard-garden/xeriscaping-creative-landscaping-7-228/>

Trees and shrubs: <https://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/yard-garden/xeriscaping-trees-and-shrubs-7-229/>

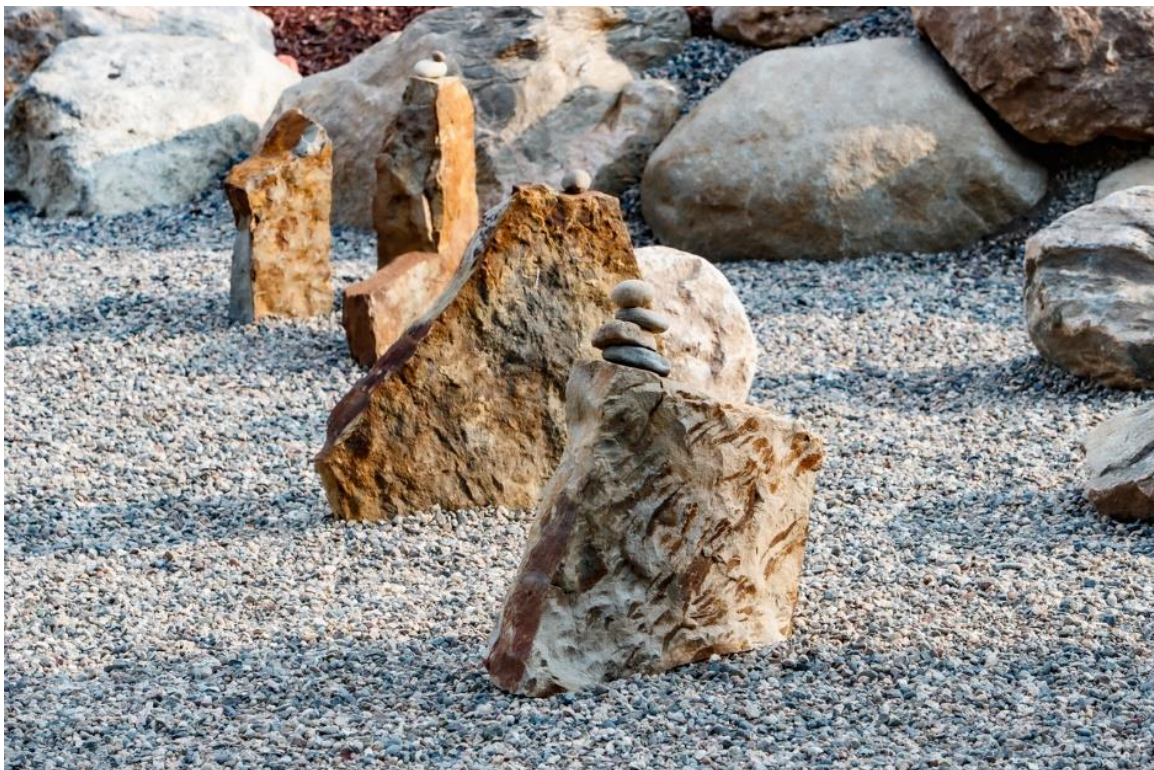
Flowers/herbaceous plants: <https://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/yard-garden/xeriscaping-perennials-and-annual-flowers-7-231/>

Rock garden plants: <https://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/yard-garden/rock-garden-plants-7-401/>

How to retrofit your yard: <https://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/yard-garden/xeriscaping-retrofit-your-yard-7-234/>

Mulching to conserve water: <https://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/yard-garden/mulches-for-home-grounds-7-214/>

And finally, a rock garden of lasting beauty created by Rick and Brooke Meoli.



Terry Audesirk,
Chair, DSC Board of Managers