

Manhattan Beach Landscape Sustainability Audit

1) **Plants on Site**—Sustainable plants are well adapted to local climate, soil, and rainfall patterns, requiring less summer watering than conventional landscape plants. They are California-friendly and thrive without pesticides or extensive fertilizer applications. For more information on plant selection visit Garden Spot at www.bewaterwise.com.

Place a +1 or a -1 for each applicable criteria listed below, and then add up to get the Total Plant Score.

+1 for Appropriate Plants

Watered twice/week

Watered only once a week

Have proper growing space to reach full size

-1 for Inappropriate Plants

Watered more than twice/week

Require fertilizer 2x/yr. or more to look healthy

Prone to disease requiring pesticide 2x/yr. or more

Total Plants Score _____

2) **Turf on Site**—According to the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, turf grass is one of the most water-intensive plants in your landscape. The high water use and frequent maintenance needs make turf grass a time-consuming, expensive option. Check the MWD website at www.socalwatersmart.com for rebates and information on turf removal and more.

Score a +3 for less than 25% turf or a +1 for less than 50% turf to get the Turf Score:

Turf Score _____

3) **Irrigation**—As a water conservation measure, it is important to periodically review your irrigation system, one zone at a time, monitoring for leaks or overspray and making repairs or upgrades as necessary.

Updated irrigation systems will score the highest points. To evaluate the irrigation, you must run each of the zones on the system. Place a +1 for each Water Saver that occurs in any zone and place a -1 for each Water Waster that occurs in any zone; then add up to get the Total Irrigation Score.

+1 Water Savers

Drip irrigation

Rotary sprinklers

Smart controller

Rain sensor

Hand watering

Irrigation off during winter

Turf grass zone & beds separate

-1 Water Wasters

"Fogging" sprinklers

Leaks

Overspray on paved areas

Microspray emitters

Water does not soak in; runs off during irrigation

Total Irrigation score _____

4) **Wildlife**—Provide for migrating and resident birds and butterflies. Flowering nectar and seed-producing plants are essential food sources. Shrubs serve as cover, while a small fountain or large moving-water feature supplies a drink and a bath.

Place a +1 for each applicable criteria below; then add up to get the Total Wildlife Score:

Plants with nectar and seeds Shrubs that provide cover and protection Fresh-water source

Total Wildlife Score _____

5) **Water Retention**—Prevent water run-off to promote clean oceans, and maintain our ground water supplies by directing irrigation and rain water where it can percolate down, into your permeable landscape. Or collect rain water for later use. Learn about rainwater harvesting and more at the Office of Sustainability and the Environment at

<http://www.smgov.net/Departments/OSE/categories/content.aspx?id=3847>.

Place a +1 for each of the following that apply, and then add up to get the Total Retaining Rainwater Score:

The use of rain slopes or grading that direct water flow to flowerbeds One or more rain barrels

A rain-water harvesting and retention system Use of permeable paving material on site

Total Retaining Rainwater Score _____

6) **Pesticides**—Little or no use, including “Rose Systemic,” “Weed and Feed,” “2 in 1 Protection,” “All in Once,” and herbicides such as Roundup. Help keep the environment healthy and thus sustainable. Learn integrated pest management techniques at www.ipm.ucdavis.edu .

Place +2 in the Pesticide Use Score if there is little or no use on site.

Pesticide Use Score _____

7) **Fertilizers**—Use limited to no more than 2x/year. Slow release fertilizer is preferable. No “Weed & Feed,” “All in One,” or “Miracle Grow.”

Place +2 in the Fertilizer Use Score if there is little or no use on site.

Fertilizer Use Score _____

8) **Organic Mulch at least 2” deep**—*Non-decomposed* garden waste such as leaves, bark, twigs, woodchips, pine needles, and nutshells improve soil health as they break down. Apply a 2” to 4” layer to impede weed growth and erosion, promote beneficial insects, maintain a steady soil temperature and reduce water evaporation. Keep mulch 2” from small plants, 6” from shrubs, and at least 12” from tree trunks. Pick up free tree-trimming mulch at the Manhattan Beach City yard located at 3621 Bell Avenue. For more information call (310) 802-5058.

Place a +2 in the Organic Mulch Score if there is the proper use of mulch on the site.

Organic Mulch Score _____

9) **Vegetables and/or fruits**—Growing your own fruits and vegetables reduces energy consumption by keeping the supply local. To maintain sustainability, these should be grown pesticide-free.

Place a +2 in the Food Production Score if there is a pesticide-free vegetable garden on site.

Food Production Score _____

10) **Compost bin**—Compost is *decomposed* nutrient-rich organic material that can be worked into the soil or left on the surface like mulch. Combine 50% greens such as fruit and vegetable scraps, grass, plant trimmings, or bread with 50% browns such as nut shells, rinsed eggshells, coffee grounds, tea bags, woodchips, sawdust, tissue, and paper towels. DO NOT ADD meat, fish, dairy, bones, diseased plants, invasive weeds, or weeds that have gone to seed. Keep moist, but not soggy (like a wrung out sponge), by applying water when needed. To purchase a worm bin (good for small yards) or compost bin, contact Waste Management at (310) 830-7100.

Place +1 in the Composting Score if there is a compost bin on site:

Composting Score _____

Total the scores from above to determine your total score:

Total Sustainable Landscape Audit Score _____

15+ = Excellent, 10–14 = Good, 0–9 = Poor

FREE Landscape Sustainability Audit

The City of Manhattan Beach now offers a free Landscape Sustainability Audit to residents using the criteria above. It is designed to be both informative and educational. Please contact one of these City-approved landscapers who will come to your home and evaluate the sustainability of your yard free of charge:

The Cutting Edge	Matt Preuss	(310) 406-2251
Enviroscape	Mike Garcia	(310) 420-8507
Land Matters	Melissa Carnehl	(310) 372-7604
Pacifica Landscape and Design	Gary Gardner	(310) 927-7064