



HOW HEALTHY IS YOUR YARD?

Use this self-assessment to evaluate Maintenance practices in your yard.

THE CITY OF OVERLAND PARK HAS PARTNERED WITH JOHNSON COUNTY K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION ON A PILOT PROJECT TO HELP YOU BE A GREEN NEIGHBOR. CERTIFY YOUR LAWN AS A “HEALTHY YARD” BY FILLING OUT THIS FORM AND MAILING OR E-MAILING IT AND AT LEAST ONE PICTURE TO:

LISA COX, PUBLIC WORKS, CITY OF OVERLAND PARK, 8500 SANTA FE DRIVE, OVERLAND PARK, KS 66212 OR LISA.COX@OPKANSAS.ORG



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE FOLLOWING PRACTICES:

- VISIT WWW.KANSASGREENYARDS.ORG OR WWW.JOHNSON.KSU.EDU
- CONTACT THE JOHNSON COUNTY K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION OFFICE AT 913/715-7000.

BUILD AND MAINTAIN A HEALTHY SOIL	Points Possible	Points Received
Soil tests have been conducted to determine pH and nutrient levels in lawn, shrub/flower beds, and fruit/vegetable gardens, if present. (Submit soil for testing at your local K-State Research and Extension office.)	3	
One to 3 inches of compost is dug or rototilled into the soil when creating new shrub and flower beds, fruit/vegetable gardens, and new lawns.	2	
Lawns are top-dressed with a quarter- to half-inch of compost and compost is worked into flower, fruit, and vegetable gardens every spring and fall.	2	
Total Points for Build and Maintain a Healthy Soil	7	

RIGHT PLANT RIGHT PLACE	Points Possible	Points Received
Majority of plants are adapted to environment and appropriate for site.	5	
Majority of trees, shrubs, and flowers require minimal fertilizer and watering.	4	
Trees near overhead or underground utilities are spaced away from utilities at appropriate distances according to power company guidelines.	3	
Plants are grouped according to water and maintenance needs.	2	
Plants are spaced appropriately based on mature size.	1	
Landscape does not intentionally include plants identified as noxious or invasive by the Kansas Department of Agriculture. Current information: http://www.ksda.gov/plant_protection/content/181	1	
Trees are maintained with good pruning practices to reduce damage in ice and wind storms.	1	
Trees and shrubs are positioned for energy efficiency.	1	
Total Points for Right Plant Right Place	18	

WATER WISE	Points Possible	Points Received
Landscape is designed to exist primarily on rainfall once established.	6	
Lawns, shrubs, flowers, and fruit/vegetable gardens are watered only as necessary to sustain growth and plant health (in compliance with local water restrictions).	2	
Watering is done early in the morning, or if done in the evening, completed at least 2 hours before dark.	2	
Please complete one of the following:		
For non-irrigated yards:		
Turf is allowed to go dormant.	7	
Lawns, trees, shrubs, flowers, and fruit/vegetable gardens are only watered deeply and infrequently.	7	
A rain gauge is used to monitor rainfall.	1	
For irrigated yards:		
Functioning smart-irrigation technology is used, such as soil moisture and water loss sensors and/or other automated devices.	3	
Irrigation does not water hard surfaces such as sidewalks and driveways.	3	
Irrigation system is calibrated to only apply 1 to 1½ inches of water per week.	2	
Separate zones for lawn and landscape areas are maintained.	2	
Rain shut-off device is installed.	2	
Drip or micro-irrigation is installed in shrub/flower beds and fruit/vegetable gardens.	1	
If smart-irrigation technology is not present, a rain gauge is used to monitor rainfall.	1	
Proper backflow devices in place.	1	
Total Points for Water Wise (Add Water Wise points from page 1.)	25	

MULCH	Points Possible	Points Received
A 2- to 3-inch layer of organic mulch is maintained around young trees, shrubs, flowers, and fruit/vegetable gardens.	3	
If used around trees, mulch is pulled away from the base of the trunk.	2	
Self-mulching areas exist under trees where leaves can remain where they fall, especially under evergreens.	1	
Newspaper is layered under mulch to suppress weeds.	1	
Total Points for Mulch	7	

GRASSCYCLE AND COMPOST	Points Possible	Points Received
Lawns are mowed at height appropriate to grass species. Fescue: 2.5-3.5 inches Kentucky bluegrass: 2-3 inches Zoysiagrass: 1-2 inches Bermudagrass: 1-2 inches Buffalograss: 2-3 inches Perennial ryegrass: 2-3 inches	2	
Yard waste is used on site (compost bin/pile or used in landscape) or placed in proper container for yard waste pickup, if available.	2	
Grass clippings are left on the lawn.	1	
Garden equipment (gasoline, electric, or manual) is maintained and blades are sharpened every 10 hours of use.	1	
An electric lawn mower or a manually operated reel mower is used instead of one powered by gasoline.	1	
Total Points for Grasscycle and Compost	7	

FERTILIZING	Points Possible	Points Received
Lawns are only fertilized when appropriate for the species. Fescue: September and November (and May, if irrigated) Kentucky bluegrass: September and November (and May, if irrigated) Zoysiagrass: May-August (two applications maximum) Bermudagrass: May-August (two applications maximum) Buffalograss: June Perennial Ryegrass: September and November	3	
Fertilizer spreaders are properly calibrated prior to use.	2	
Minimal to no supplemental fertilization is used around trees and in landscape beds unless recommended by a soil test. Fruit and vegetable gardens are fertilized according to individual crop needs.	2	
Total Points for Fertilizing	7	

MANAGING YARD PESTS	Points Possible	Points Received
Landscape is planted with trees, shrubs, flowers, and fruit/vegetable plants that are resistant to insect and disease problems.	5	
Plants are checked every 1 to 2 weeks for signs of problems.	3	
Problems are positively identified before being treated.	3	
Nonchemical approaches such as pruning affected areas, hand-removing insects, or using a strong spray of water to dislodge pests are used as a first choice for pest control whenever possible.	2	
Environmentally friendly pesticides such as horticultural oils and insecticidal soaps are used as a second choice when nonchemical approaches are not feasible.	2	
All labels on pesticide products are read before the product is applied.	2	
Pesticide and/or fertilizer products are stored and disposed of properly according to manufacturers' recommendations on product labels.	1	
Total Points for Managing Yard Pests	18	

STORMWATER RUNOFF AND POLLUTION / WATER QUALITY	Points Possible	Points Received
Rain gardens and bioswales exist to collect and filter stormwater runoff.	3	
Roof runoff drains onto lawn or landscaped areas instead of impervious surfaces.	2	
Rain barrels and/or cisterns are used to collect rainwater.	2	
Mulch, bricks, flagstones, gravel, and/or other porous surfaces are used for walkways and patios when possible, following local building codes.	1	
Fertilizer, grass clippings, leaves and other potential contaminants are removed from the street, curb line, and other impervious surfaces and disposed of properly.	1	
Areas prone to erosion have soil-stabilizing plant material or mulch.	1	
Pollutants such as pet waste and motor oil are disposed of properly.	1	
Total Points for Stormwater Runoff and Pollution/Water Quality	11	

SONGBIRDS AND BUTTERFLIES	Points Possible	Points Received
Flowers, shrubs, and trees are planted that provide cover, nesting areas, or food sources for birds, butterflies, and/or other wildlife.	3	
A water source, such as a bird bath or a small pond, is provided for wildlife. Shallow rocks that hold water are adequate for butterflies.	1	
Wildlife shelters such as bat houses, bird houses, brush piles, and such are provided.	1	
Total Points for Songbirds and Butterflies	5	

TOTAL	Points Possible	Points Received
Build and Maintain a Healthy Soil	7	
Right Plant Right Place	18	
Water Wise	25	
Mulch	7	
Grasscycle and Compost	7	
Fertilizing	7	
Managing Yard Pests	18	
Stormwater Runoff and Pollution / Water Quality	11	
Songbirds and Butterflies	5	
Total Points Possible	105	

How Healthy is Your Yard?

0-35 points

Waiting to Sprout – By completing this assessment, you have taken the first step toward improving the health of your yard and community. Use this assessment plus tips from www.kansasgreenyards.org to make your yard and community healthier.

CERTIFIED HEALTHY YARD

36-50 points

Green Seedling – Your yard has sprouted into a healthier place for you and your community. Continue these healthy practices and strive to implement more of these tips into your yard.

51-75 points

Actively Growing – You are doing a great job of using environmentally healthy practices in your yard. Implementing a few more practices will have you blooming soon.

76-105 points

Blooming with Green – You are well aware that your yard management practices affect the health of your community. You are making environmentally conscious choices.

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Kansas State University, County Extension Councils, Extension Districts, and United States Department of Agriculture Cooperating, Fred A. Cholick, Director.

Johnson County Stormwater Program