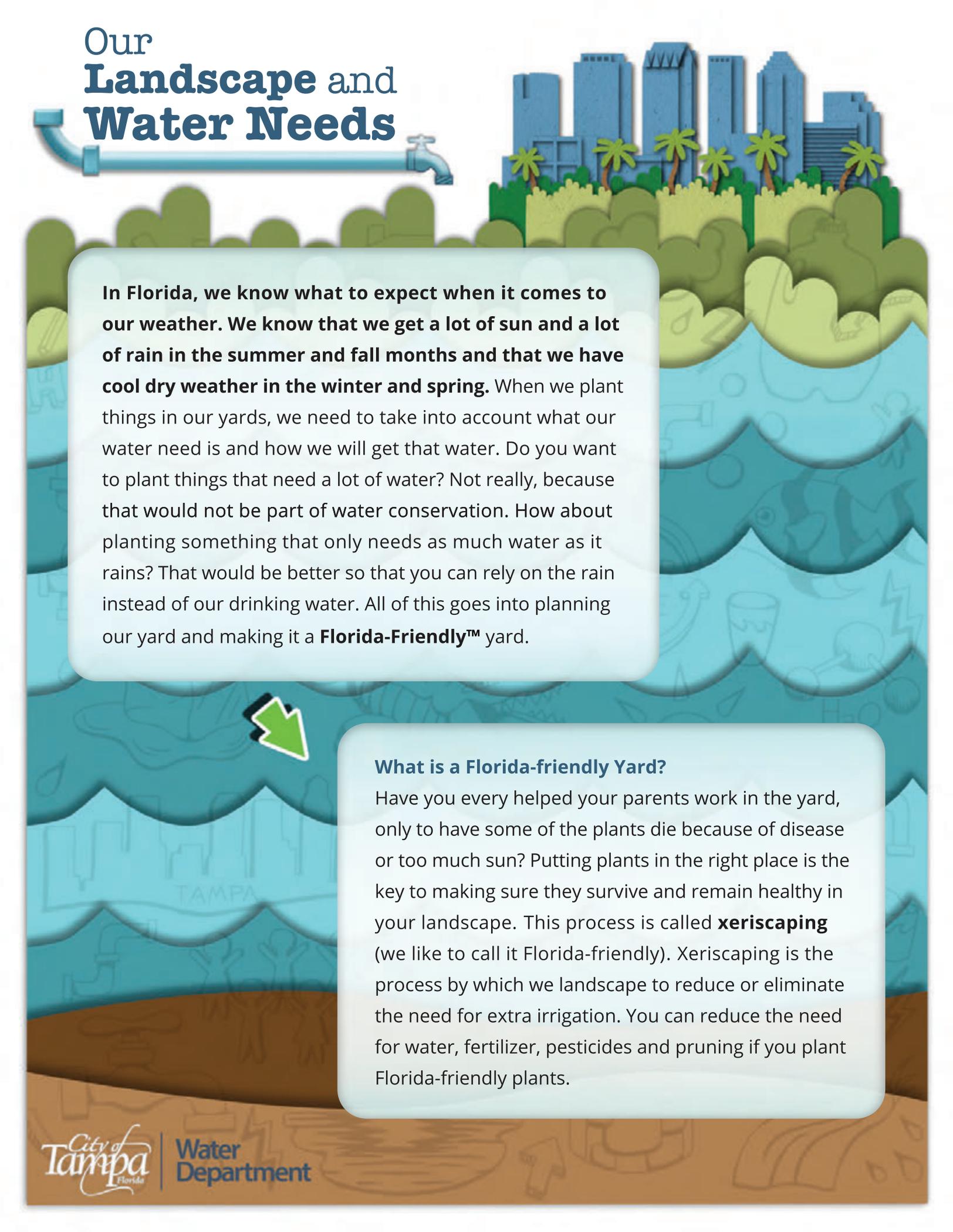


# Our Landscape and Water Needs



In Florida, we know what to expect when it comes to our weather. We know that we get a lot of sun and a lot of rain in the summer and fall months and that we have cool dry weather in the winter and spring. When we plant things in our yards, we need to take into account what our water need is and how we will get that water. Do you want to plant things that need a lot of water? Not really, because that would not be part of water conservation. How about planting something that only needs as much water as it rains? That would be better so that you can rely on the rain instead of our drinking water. All of this goes into planning our yard and making it a **Florida-Friendly™** yard.



## What is a Florida-friendly Yard?

Have you every helped your parents work in the yard, only to have some of the plants die because of disease or too much sun? Putting plants in the right place is the key to making sure they survive and remain healthy in your landscape. This process is called **xeriscaping** (we like to call it Florida-friendly). Xeriscaping is the process by which we landscape to reduce or eliminate the need for extra irrigation. You can reduce the need for water, fertilizer, pesticides and pruning if you plant Florida-friendly plants.

# Our Landscape and Water Needs

## Understanding Your Environment

There are many things you have to think about when planning your **Florida-Friendly™** yard. You want to understand the soil, sunlight and water conditions of the area you are planting. So, choose plants that match and thrive under the conditions available in your yard and the conditions of our climate. Do you have a lot of shade from the trees in your yard? Do you have sand instead of dirt? Where does your water come from?

## What Should You Plant?

When looking at plants, there are a few things to consider. You want to learn about invasive plants. An invasive plant is one that is not native to Florida. These plants have can grow and take over the native plant species because they don't have any natural enemies in this environment. Another thing to consider is to plant a variety of Florida-friendly plants, including flowering and fruiting plants that attract butterflies, birds, beneficial insects and other wildlife. Many Florida native plants are especially good at attracting wildlife. Don't forget the grass! You don't just have to worry about plants; also plan grass areas so that you can water them easily.

# Our Landscape and Water Needs

## How to Water Efficiently

**Florida-Friendly™** lawns come in particularly handy when it comes to watering your new yard. This is probably the most beneficial side effect of a Florida-friendly yard. On average, almost **50 percent** of water used by households is used outdoors. That is a lot of water! Why do we use so much if it rains so often in Florida? So, if you can create a yard that thrives on rainfall only, you not only save money on your water bill, you reduce your water usages, reduce maintenance on your yard and have a healthy landscape! Ever seen someone watering their grass while it is raining? That is not only irresponsible; it's bad for the yard. More water does not equal a better yard! In fact, overwatered grass has short roots that make it harder to survive pest attacks, disease and drought. It only takes 3/4 of an inch of water at each application to make your lawn happy.



50%

of water used by  
households is used  
outdoors

# Our Landscape and Water Needs



## Short Answer

How do you help your parents in the yard?  
Do you help pick out the new plants and where to plant them?

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What is a Florida-Friendly™ yard? Why is it good for conserving water?

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# Our Landscape and Water Needs



## Puzzle

Unscramble each of the clue words.

Take the letters that appear in boxes and unscramble them for the final message.

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