

SONOMA RANCH HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION LANDSCAPING GUIDELINES

June 17, 2010 Landscape Guidelines Revised October 17, 2013

Within six (6) months of the date of closing, the Owner of a Lot must complete installation of landscape and irrigation improvements in compliance with the Sonoma Ranch CC&R's and these Guidelines in that portion of his Lot which is between the street(s) adjacent to his Lot and the exterior wall of his Residential Unit or any wall separating the side or back yard of the Lot from the front yard of the Lot.

The minimum requirements for front yard landscaping are as follows:

- One (1) 15-gallon tree or cactus
- Six (6) 1-gallon or larger shrubs or bushes
- Organic or inorganic ground cover
- Underground irrigation to such trees and shrubs

Prior to installation of such landscaping, the Owner shall maintain the front yard of his Lot in a weed-free condition.

It is recommended that back yard landscaping be installed at this time as well since construction access to the back yard is often through the front yard.

Plans for landscape need not be submitted for approval, provided the following guidelines are met.

HARDSCAPE

Any "hardscape" must be approved by the Architectural Committee prior to installation. (See the Sonoma Ranch Architectural Review Committee Guidelines.) Hardscape is any material other than rock ground cover and plant materials. Materials included in hardscape are concrete, brick, decorative tile, wood, etc. Examples of hardscape items are planters, walkways, retaining walls, decorative walls, statuary, and fountains.

TURF

The Town of Gilbert currently does not limit the amount of turf on residential lots. However, Sonoma Ranch Homeowner's Association joins the Town of Gilbert in encouraging water conservation. It is recommended that you consider the installation of turf areas where it can be used for play, for example; and consider desert landscaping in other areas.

ROCK GROUND COVER

If decomposed granite or other landscape rock is used, it must be of an "earth tone" color and not white, green, blue, red or other bright colors. All rock areas shall be treated with pre-emergent weed control at regular intervals to retard weed growth. Planting underliner is discouraged.

River rock shall be three (3) to six (6) inches in diameter. Not more than 10 percent of the front yard landscape may be river rock.

IRRIGATION SYSTEM

A drip system is strongly encouraged for all landscaped areas except turf.

PROHIBITED PLANT MATERIALS

The following vegetation types and varieties are expressly prohibited:

- A.** Olive trees (*Olea europaea*) other than the "Swan Hill" variety. These trees create considerable pollen which disturbs allergy sufferers. A mature tree produces thousands of olives which drop and create a mess in the landscape
- B.** Oleanders (*Nerium oleander*) other than the dwarf variety and Thevetia (*Thevetia* species). Oleanders other than dwarf and thevetia get to such a size and trunk thickness that they are difficult to control.
- C.** Pampas Grass (*Cortaderia selloana*). Within a very few years, pampas grass build up thatch which makes them extremely difficult to trim back. As a result, they are often let go and are unattractive. They also create a substantial amount of litter. Pampas grass blades are so sharp, they can easily produce sliver cuts.
- D.** All varieties of Citrus are permissible within the confines of the rear yard only.
- E.** Mexican Palo Verde (*Parkinsonia axuleata*). This tree is known for its extreme shedding.
- F.** All varieties of mulberry trees. Mulberry trees join fruiting olive trees as a major pollen contributor.

FINE GRADING AND MOUNDING

Fine grading is a critical aspect of landscaping. Each lot has been graded such that all storm water will drain away from the house. It is important that this drainage pattern be maintained when preparing the landscape design, especially if mounding or berming is proposed. In all cases, the installation must comply with the Town of Gilbert grading and drainage plan.

Mounding or berming within an area measured seven feet behind the back of the curb along the entire frontage of a lot is discouraged.

Every effort should be made to make the mounding appear natural.

WATER FEATURES, STATUARY, ETC.

Items such as fountains, lighting statuary, etc., are permitted within the rear yard. Such items must be approved by the Architectural Committee to be installed in the front yard. (See the Sonoma Ranch Architectural Committee Review Guidelines.) It is recommended that water features be chlorinated.

LIGHTING

Lighting must be approved by the Architectural Committee. (See the Sonoma Ranch Architectural Committee Review Guidelines.)

- A.** Lighting shall be shielded such that the light shines primarily on the Lot. Lights which create glare visible from other lots are prohibited.
- B.** Light fixtures shall not exceed an illumination intensity of more than one (1) foot candle power as measured from lot line.
- C.** Outside lights should be screened wherever possible with walls, plant materials, or internal shielding.

MAINTENANCE

All installed landscape material must be regularly maintained by the homeowner.

- A.** Grass areas must be kept weed free and trimmed neatly. Bare dirt patches in grass areas are prohibited.
- B.** Granite areas must be kept weed and grass free. Bare dirt patches in granite areas are prohibited.
- C.** Driveways and sidewalks must be kept weed free, and granite must be swept back into granite areas.
- D.** Trees must be trimmed to allow building, walkway, and street clearance. Branches must be kept a minimum of three feet from the ground.
- E.** Shrubs must be trimmed and maintained in a neat looking manner, and to allow walkway clearance. Shrubs may not be allowed to grow so that address numbers are not visible from the street.
- F.** Dead and brown plants, as well as dead and brown leaves, branches, fronds and flowers must be removed.
- G.** The front yard must be kept clear of all trash and debris, including fallen leaves and other landscape debris.
- H.** Any water features, statuary, and lighting installed must be kept in good working order and cleaned and maintained regularly.

ANY ADDITIONS OR IMPROVEMENTS THAT CHANGE THE EXTERIOR APPEARANCE OF THE HOME OR PROPERTY, EXCEPT FOR THE ROCK GROUND COVER OR NATURAL VEGETATION, MUST BE APPROVED BY THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE.

THESE LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES MAY BE AMMENDED FROM TIME TO TIME BY A MAJORITY VOTE OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.