

# Got Greens?

## Consider Composting, Grasscycling, and Water-Wise Plants

A large part of the waste put into the landfills is green waste, or plant material from your yard and kitchen. By practicing backyard composting or grasscycling, the material never leaves your property and adds valuable nutrients to your yard.

### Backyard Composting...

is speeding up the process of decomposition of plant material. These materials are typically from yard / grass clippings and raw kitchen scraps (from fruits and vegetables). As the material breaks down it eventually turns into compost, the "black gold" of gardeners.

The steps to backyard composting involves mixing "greens" which are high in nitrogen, "browns" which are high in carbon, water and air. When these ingredients are combined, beneficial insects and microbes begin the process of breaking down the material.

Eventually, the material breaks down into compost. You know when it's done when you can't tell what it used to be; it looks like dirt. When mixed into the soil, compost improves soil structure, retains water, balances pH, and adds valuable nutrients.

### Grasscycling...

is the practice of slowing down the growth rate of your lawn and leaving grass clippings on your yard when you mow. These clippings decompose in your lawn and release nutrients back into the soil. Grasscycling eliminates the need to bag and dispose of your clippings, thereby saving you time and energy. Though a "mulching mower" makes this process easier, you can practice Grasscycling with your existing mower.

### Water-Wise Plants...

use less water, require less maintenance, and produce less green waste than lawns. Drought tolerant plants are more than just cactus and succulents. Many varieties are not only Southern California friendly, but also fragrant and colorful, like the California Fuchsia pictured to the left.

*If you would like to learn more about composting and grasscycling, please contact the County of San Bernardino Solid Waste Management Division at 1-800-722-8004 or the High Desert Master Composters at 1-888-URECYCLE. For information on drought tolerant plants, contact your local nursery or visit [www.bewaterwise.com](http://www.bewaterwise.com).*