The City has developed waterwise verge best practices to empower its residents to green their verges in a safe and sustainable way. Waterwise verges can help with urban cooling whilst creating biodiversity corridors within our streetscapes. These guidelines enable residents to maximise the use of verges adjacent to their property, whilst ensuring there is enough space for pedestrians, service utilities and trees. Upgrading of a verge that is designed and installed in line with these best practices and the City’s verge greening guidelines does not require the City's approval.

**Remove Lawn and Weeds**

The City of Bayswater encourages residents to help save water by establishing waterwise unirrigated verges. To remove the lawn dig out the existing verge soil and any grass roots. It is important that the verge ground level is at least 7.5cm below surrounding kerbs and paths.  This way mulch can be placed on top whilst ensuring the finished level remains lower than the adjoining paths or kerbs. Removal of lawn grasses is crucial to the success of a waterwise verge garden to prevent competition with new plantings.

**Soil Quality**

Good soil is the foundation of a healthy waterwise garden, the healthier your soil the more drought resistant your plants will be. If using a range of exotic and native plants or if your verge will need to be irrigated, we encourage residents to incorporate soil conditioners like composted organic matter and clay, such as Bentonite, within the top 30cm of soil to improve moisture and nutrient holding capacity.  Applying a good quality soil wetting agent will increase ‘wettability’, allowing water to penetrate deep into the root zone. This is particularly important during planting, to help your plants establish and grow deep roots.

When buying soil conditioner or wetting agents, select products with the Waterwise and Smart Approved WaterMark symbols and refer to the manufacturer’s instructions for application rates. For more information view the Water Corporations [water saving products search](https://www.watercorporation.com.au/save-water/search-for-waterwise-services).

**Choose Waterwise Plants**

Creating unirrigated dryland and choosing native plants is recommended for verge gardens as they can survive our hot dry summers with little to no supplementary watering once established. Especially typically local native plant species are drought tolerant. When choosing your plants take local conditions into consideration, such as the quality of your soil and how many hours of direct sunlight it receives.

Plants that may reasonably be considered to pose a hazard to people; such as plants that are poisonous or with thorns greater than 1 inch should be avoided. Similarly, choose plants that do not interfere with or cause damage to the footpath, trees or property on the verge.

**Apply Mulch**

When applying mulch, spread a 5-10cm thick even layer of course mulch, keeping clear from the stem of plants. Mulching your garden will help to improve your soil, reduce plant stress and evaporation, suppress weed growth and greatly improve the appearance of your garden. The finished mulch must be level with adjoining kerbs and footpath. This will ensure the mulch stays in place and does not spread or flow onto footpaths or into stormwater systems.

**Irrigation**

When designing your waterwise verge garden in line with these best practices your verge won’t need a permanent irrigation system. Once established, unirrigated dryland, native plants can survive our hot dry summers with little to no supplementary watering.

If you do require irrigation, Water Corporation recommends sub-surface drip irrigation. A local Waterwise irrigation Service Provider can help with maximising water efficiency. Please remember to check your [watering days](https://www.watercorporation.com.au/wateringdays) and be sure to [apply for a watering exemption](https://www.watercorporation.com.au/save-water/watering-days/exemptions) if your new verge garden needs additional watering.

**More Information**

The City has an annual ‘native plants for residents program’ to help you transform your verge into a waterwise verge. For more information on this program call 9272 0962.

For more handy water saving tips, garden design ideas and videos on how to makeover your verge visit the [Water Corporation website](https://www.watercorporation.com.au/save-water/in-the-garden).

For more information on what you can and can't do on your verge, view the City's verge greening guidelines. If a waterwise verge is considered to pose a safety hazard or does not meet the above guidelines the City may ask you to undertake works to meet these requirements or remove the waterwise verge. Waterwise verges may have to be disturbed to allow access for utility service providers and the installation of footpaths. In these cases, the disturbed area may be returned to level ground.