Steiner Ranch Master Association
Xeriscaping Regulations for Landscape Design

These xeriscape rules supplement the Declaration. If there is conflict between the Declaration and these rules, the Declaration controls, but if there is a conflict between the Residential Design Guidelines Manual (the "Guidelines") and these rules, this document controls. All capitalized terms in these rules shall have the meaning as outlined in the Declaration & Guidelines.

1. Purpose

Xeriscaping is the practice of creating landscaping designs utilizing native and adapted plants that tolerate droughts and high heat with minimal watering requirements. Xeriscaping provides an attractive alternative to turf dominated yards and combines native plants, efficient irrigation, and sustainable ground covers that can:

a) lower outdoor water use by 30 – 70%

b) lower long-term maintenance costs

c) enhance neighborhood beauty and promote health of the environment; and

d) promote conservation of water and protect the ecological environment

2. Benefits

a) **Water savings:** Reducing irrigation can potentially lower utility bills and conserve critical regional water supplies

b) **Soil Erosion Control:** Properly selected ground covers slow runoff, encourage infiltration of rain and stabilize grade changes.

c) **Pollution Reduction:** By minimizing fertilizer, pesticides, and mowers, each homeowner can lower storm-water pollution and greenhouse gas emissions and promote environmental stewardship.

3. Approval Required prior to Installation

a) **Approval Required:** All owners must submit an application and receive written approval from the Architectural Control Committee (the "ACC") for any landscaping changes **before** installing or modifying any lot.

b) Section 3.1 of the Design Guidelines identify minimum submission requirements. Submissions must include completed application, property survey with dimensions & existing trees with sizes, a separate scaled landscaping plan, plant list with quantity & size of each species, and material samples/photos,

c) The approval process can take up to 30 Days per Section 3.2 of the Design Guidelines. Owners are encouraged to review the process to ensure all required documents are submitted.

d) Post-installation inspection will be completed to verify compliance and conformance to submission. Deviations from approved plans will not be permitted.

© 2025 Niemann & Heyer LLP

e) Owners must re-submit applications to request modifications.

4. Design Standards

a) All xeriscape plans must accommodate the owner's original grade, existing trees, drainage patterns and sight-line safety requirements.

b) It is required to use a variety of plants, plant sizes & textures so that **at least 50%** of the converted ground area is covered by living plants one year from installation of xeriscaping. This must be adhered to during dormant seasons. Initial xeriscaping plans are required to include a minimum of 5 gallon or larger starter plants. Smaller 1- 3 gallon sizes may be used with approval from the ACC. It is the submitting owner's responsibility to ensure that the plantings requested will grow to cover at least 50% of the xeriscape ground area in one year. The Lot will be in violation of the deed restrictions should this not occur in the board's reasonable discretion.

c) Owners must maintain the required number and sized trees in the front yard at all times found in their Neighborhood's Declaration. Owners must not pile rocks along the tree trunk or add soil / mulch above the root crown which can cause root girdling and death.

d) Landscaping design must provide attractive curb appeal that is in harmony with the surrounding neighborhood and greenbelts. Recommendations include separating groupings into several beds, using several species of plants of different heights, colors and textures, and providing focal points with architectural elements such as paths, dry stream beds, benches, fountains or boulders.

e) Please consult the Guidelines in Section 7.3—Retaining Walls of the Guidelines for specifics on retaining walls, Section 5.4 – Grading & Drainage for erosion control, and Section 5.2 – for Impervious Cover (also refer to City of Austin Code § 25123).

f) The color of all rocks, retaining walls, pavers, and gravel shall be natural. Stark white elements and reflective surfaces will be rejected as well as colored glass mulch, nut shells & husks, red or black lava rocks, and any sharp or toxic elements.

4.1 Turf Grass Integration

a) Incorporating areas of live turf grass is encouraged on every lot to slow runoff, filter pollutants, provide functional play space, and encourage biodiversity.

b) Complete and full removal of turf grass or sod is **not** allowed.

c) Any alternative native ground cover shall be approved at the discretion of the ACC based upon lot size, tree coverage, or extenuating circumstances.

d) **Recommended species:** Drought-tolerant varieties such as but not limited to: Buffalograss, Celebration' Bermuda, Zoysia Japonica, or others found in the *Grow Green Native & Adapted Plant Guide*.

e) **Placement:** Best for sunny, relatively flat areas where grass assists in erosion control or receives foot traffic.

© 2025 Niemann & Heyer LLP

f) **Irrigation:** Use high-efficiency nozzles or subsurface drip lines to comply with watering mandates.

g) **Maintenance:** Grass shall not exceed 6 inches in height. Edging, mowing, and weed removal must be performed to community standards.

4.2 Plant Selection

a) Owners are recommended to choose native species from the City of Austin's *Grow Green Native & Adapted Plant Guide*. https://www.austintexas.gov/department/grow-green Examples: cedar sage, Esperanza (yellow bells), dwarf yaupon holly, lantana, muhly grass (Mexican feather grass), various salvias, various yuccas, etc.

b) Owners must avoid highly flammable species within 5-30' of structure as notated in Firewise Landscaping. https://travis-tx.tamu.edu/about-2/horticulture/basic-landscape-design/firewise-landscaping/ Examples include eastern red cedar, holly bushes, and palmetto (palm trees).

c) Invasive species are prohibited. Invasive species include as chinaberry trees, Chinese sumac (tree of heaven), ligustrums (privet), photinia (red tips), golden bamboo or sacred bamboo. If invasive plants (see link below) currently exist on your property, they must be removed when the xeriscaping plan is initiated.https://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Watershed/invasive/2013_Invasives_guide_small.pdf

d) Owners are encouraged to choose the best plants for the soil pH and lighting conditions on their lots.

e) Highly toxic plants are prohibited in xeriscape design. If these plants currently exist (anywhere) on your property, it is recommended that they be removed when the xeriscaping plan is initiated. Examples: oleander & caster bean.

f) Owners are encouraged to create shade by planting trees of varying types and heights including dwarf varieties. Examples: Crape Myrtle, Desert Willow, Live Oak, Mountain Laurel, and Pride of Barbados. For extensive information on tree varieties and care, please visit the Texas A&M Texas Forest Service website. http://txforestservice.tamu.edu

g) Special consideration will be used on lots beside greenbelts and preserves.

4.3 Ground Cover Selection

a) The following materials are recommended for ground covers:

   i. **Native Plants.** Please visit the City of Austin's Grow Green website (listed above) for recommended plants and their appropriate locations. Examples: frogfruit, horseherb, liriope, matted sandmat, & silver ponyfoot.

   ii. **Hardwood Mulch** – shredded or chipped. Apply annually and refresh to maintain a bed of 2-3 inches deep.

© 2025 Niemann & Heyer LLP

iii. **Rocks.** Decomposed granite, crushed limestone, natural colored river rock and natural colored gravel or pebbles. These must be contained within the lot and must be flush or slightly below the surface of sidewalks & driveways with weed barrier underneath. Eco friendly options for weed barrier include burlap, cardboard, or newspaper. Ideal weed barriers that extend under tree canopies include a thick layer of straw, shredded leaves or grass clippings. Plastic weed barrier is not recommended.

iv. Gravel is discouraged as ground cover and must only be used minimally.

b) Decomposed granite, pea gravel, crushed limestone, and hardwood mulch are encouraged to be contained by metal edging, stone pavers, etc. and are prohibited in low-lying or wash-out areas, especially near storm drains, except where used for containment of ground cover materials. *Overflow of rocks into streets or public walkways will result in fines.*

c) **Flagstones & permeable pavers** must be set on compacted bases of sand or decomposed granite. It is recommended that the flagstones and pavers are set flush or slightly above grade of driveways and sidewalks.

d) **Edging** is required where loose material abuts turf or beds and may not protrude more than 2" above grade. Metal, stone or masonry edging recommended.

e) **No artificial turf or rubber mulch is allowed in the front yard.**

4.4 Sidewalk or Parking Strip (also called the "Nuisance Strip")

a) **Height & Containment:** All plants within the Sidewalk or Parking strip must be **less than 18 inches tall,** except where utilized to screen transformers, to maintain visibility of pedestrians and motorists. Plants and/or ground cover must not encroach upon the walkway or street. Ground cover may not exceed 3 inches in height.

b) **Plants with thorns, needle-like leaves or spikes are not allowed to be planted within these areas**. These plants must be 3 feet from the sidewalk in the main part of the yard.

c) **No rocks or gravel less than 1.5 inches in diameter** including pea gravel. Decomposed granite, pea gravel, crushed limestone, and hardwood mulch may be disallowed in low-lying or wash-out areas.

d) Boulders between the curb and sidewalk may not be more than 18 inches tall.

e) **No artificial turf or rubber mulch are permitted.**

f) **All work done must be done carefully and owners should always use caution and call 8-1-1 prior to digging in or near a public easement.**

4.5 Hardscape & Decorative Features

a) **Boulders** and other hardscape materials (examples: rocks, paths, stairs, patios, retaining walls, fountains and other man-made elements) must be natural in color and harmonious

© 2025 Niemann & Heyer LLP

with the residence and neighborhood. Boulders should be used sparingly and positioned as focal points in the landscaping design.

b) **'Dry stream beds'** made of various sized rocks (2-6 inches in diameter) are encouraged in low lying areas that are prone to flash flooding to help mitigate erosion & soil loss.

c) No more than 3 decorative features are allowed. The ACC may grant variances based upon yard size, landscaping design & aesthetic values. Decorative features include fountains, statues and similar features.

d) No Cinder blocks (also known as common concrete blocks or CMU's) are permitted in the front yard. Red masonry may only be used for hardscaping on properties where said material is used as the main exterior building material.

e) No pressure treated lumber or railroad ties are permitted in the front yard.

f) Rain barrels, if used, must be screened from view and installed in the back yard or screened side yard.

5. Irrigation & Watering

a) Drip irrigation or hand watering is recommended; cap or convert unused spray heads.

b) All irrigation must comply with City of Austin, WCID #17 codes and all other authorities having jurisdiction. Follow all watering stipulations, mandates and schedules. https://www.wcid17.org/water-restrictions-and-conservation/

c) Back-flow prevention device is required.

6. Maintenance & Responsibilities

a) Owners must maintain beds and manually remove weeds and litter on a regular basis so as to maintain a neat and attractive appearance. Regular upkeep such as pruning, weeding, edging, and seasonal clean-ups are essential to preserve curb appeal and protect property values.

b) Owners should use chemical treatments only in emergencies. Spot treating pests or infections is recommended.

c) Owners must prune plants to prevent encroachment on sidewalks, driveways, and maintain line-of-sight for pedestrians and motorists.

d) Owners must replace dead or dying plants within one growing season.

e) Owners must cut back dormant perennials and ornamental grasses at the conclusion of the seeding season (typically winter).

f) Owners must refresh mulch and rock annually to maintain coverage depth and color.

g) Failure to maintain xeriscape areas constitutes a Declaration violation and is subject to enforcement. However, in the event of county or city-imposed watering restrictions, no

© 2025 Niemann & Heyer LLP

fines will be levied for brown or discolored vegetation in accordance with Texas Property Code § 202.008.

Quick Reference:

SRMA ACC approval is required **before** installation

No artificial turf allowed in the front yard. Reference Design Guidelines for backyard installation requirements.

Live plants must cover an area greater than 50% at one year from installation of xeriscaping.

No mulch, loose material or spiky/thorny plants within 3 feet of curb or public walkways

No boulders over 18" tall or plants over 18" tall in the strip between the curb and sidewalk, unless used for streaming transformer.

Use edging or retaining walls where needed to prevent wash-out

Dead or dying plants must be replaced within 1 growing season. Ornamental grasses and perennials must be cut back in winter.

/Volumes/File Server/CLIENTS/Steiner Ranch (Master)/Rule Xeriscaping 12:25/Draft Rule 1-20-26 .docx

© 2025 Niemann & Heyer LLP

STATE OF TEXAS §

COUNTY OF TRAVIS §

AMENDMENT OF RULES AND REGULATIONS
OF
STEINER RANCH MASTER ASSOCIATION, INC.

Related to Xeriscaping

Document reference. Reference is made to the Amended and Restated Master Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions filed as Document No. 2017097349 in the Official Public Records of Travis County, Texas, (together with all annexation documents and amendments thereto, the "**Declaration**").

Reference is made to the Bylaws filed as Document No. 2016003167 in the Official Public Records of Travis County, Texas (together with all amendments, the "**Bylaws**")

Reference is further made to the Residential Design Guideline Manual filed as Document No. 2003057159 in the Official Public Records of Travis County, Texas (together with any additional rules or policies filed of record, the "**Rules**").

WHEREAS the owners of lots subject to the Declaration are automatically made members of Steiner Ranch Master Association, Inc. (the "**Association**");

WHEREAS Section 3.04(a) the Association's Declaration authorizes its Board of Directors to adopt and amend Rules for the Association, and the Board has previously adopted the Rules; and

WHEREAS the Board has voted at a properly noticed meeting to adopt the additional rule set forth below;

THEREFORE the Rules have been, and by these presents are, amended as follows:

By adopting the rules contained in Exhibit "A".

Subject solely to the amendments contained in Exhibit "A", all of the rules of the Association remain in full force and effect.

APPROVED and ADOPTED this 20 day of February, 2026.

(*Signature and Notary Blocks on Following Page*)

Steiner Ranch Master Association, Inc.

Acting by and through its Board of Directors

NAME: Paul Boomgaard

TITLE: President

Exhibit "A": Xeriscaping Policy

Acknowledgement

STATE OF TEXAS §

COUNTY OF TRAVIS §

This instrument was executed and acknowledged before me on the 20th day of February, 2026, by Paul Boomgaard in the capacity stated above.

Notary Public, State of Texas

Emily Joan Winters
My Commission Expires
10/16/2029
Notary ID135536548

© 2025 Niemann & Heyer LLP