

# the dirt



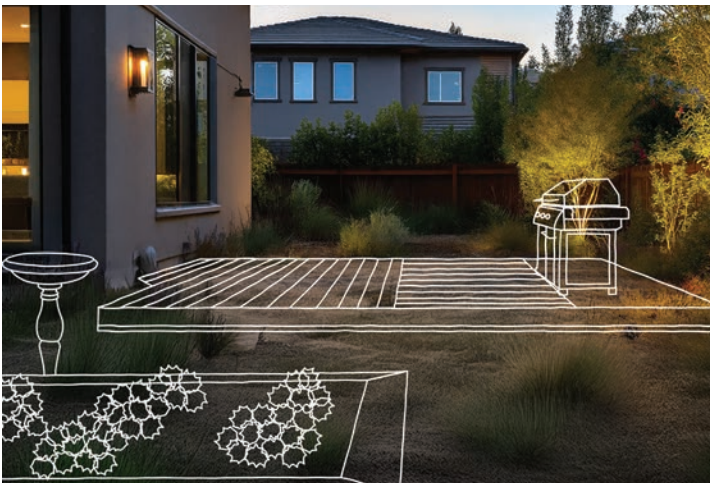
FALL 2025 GARDENING NEWSLETTER



## Dream designs for all this fall.



Create an outdoor retreat for yourself and those you love most.



Take the yard you imagine, left, and transform it into the outdoor space of your dreams, right, with a little help at [yardtopia.com](https://yardtopia.com).

The start of fall ushers in a return to routine. With summer vacations long gone and school back in session, you might find yourself at home more often.

This is the perfect season to finally turn your yard into the outdoor retreat of your dreams—and the dreams of those you love most.

The Yardtopia™ Initiative is about transforming your backyard into the outdoor space that works best for you, your family and loved ones.

Maybe your Yardtopia features rose bushes and a birdbath, but your partner envisions entertainment features like a fire pit, grill and outdoor TV.

Perhaps your kid's wish list includes lawn games and a projector screen for movie night with friends, but you can't imagine where that fits with your koi pond or herb garden.

A seamless blend of all visions is possible. Consider the opportunities your outdoor space holds and take the first simple steps to transform your landscape this fall. Browse the Yardtopia website for design inspiration, planning tips and project resources.

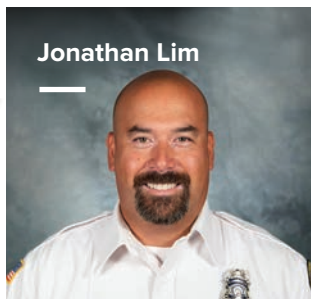
Imagine what your yard could become at [yardtopia.com](https://yardtopia.com).



# Fire-ready homes.

**Your landscape can help protect your property.**

Jonathan Lim



## Jonathan Lim | Senior Fire Inspector

Senior Fire Inspector Jonathan Lim works in the Community Wildfire Mitigation section of the Orange County Fire Authority, where he helps people in high-fire-risk communities protect themselves against wildfires.

### How does your team prepare neighborhoods for wildfire season, and how can residents get involved?

**Lim:** We conduct home assessments, offer educational resources and collaborate with local agencies to reduce wildfire risk. Residents can get involved by attending community workshops, joining Fire Safe Councils or simply starting with their own property. For more information, visit the Orange County Fire Authority community website at [OCFA.org/community](https://OCFA.org/community) or the Cal Fire website [readyforwildfire.org](https://readyforwildfire.org).

### What should residents do to remain wildfire-ready?

**Lim:** Home hardening makes your home more resistant to catching fire from embers, radiant heat and direct flame contact. Key measures include installing ember-resistant vents, using noncombustible roofing and siding materials and sealing gaps where embers can enter. Regular maintenance is just as critical. Clearing gutters of dry leaves, inspecting roof edges and checking that fences or decks are made of fire-resistant materials can make a big difference during wildfire season.



Another big risk is having combustible materials such as plants, mulch, patio furniture and fences too close to the home.

### How can plant choices help?

**Lim:** Firescaping focuses on using fire-resistant plants and design strategies that slow the spread of fire. In Orange County, native species like California lilac, manzanita and succulents are great options because they are low-water and naturally fire-smart.

To learn more about fortifying your home and protecting your family, go to [OCFA.org/ready-set-go](https://OCFA.org/ready-set-go), email [rsgoc@OCFA.org](mailto:rsgoc@OCFA.org) or call 714-573-6774.



# Plant a tree, earn a rebate.

**Participants in our Turf Replacement Program can get \$100 per tree.**

Trees are a smart investment for your landscape and the environment.

They provide shade and cool the living spaces in your yard. They also capture and redirect rainwater to reduce runoff, improve air and water quality and support local biodiversity.

If you're thinking about redoing your landscape and using IRWD's Turf Replacement Program to help pay for it, consider also applying for a rebate on trees—up to \$100 per tree, and up to five trees per year!

Adding a tree to your landscape design adds a beautiful focal point to your yard. It also satisfies the sustainability feature required to receive a rebate for the Turf Replacement Program.

For a tree to qualify, it must be expected to reach at least 15 feet in height with a canopy at least 10 feet wide. For more information, go to [IRWD.com/turf rebate](http://IRWD.com/turf rebate), where you can also find information on the tree rebate and more.

Marina strawberry tree



## A few of our favorites

Looking for qualifying trees that will flourish with minimal care? Consider:

- California laurel
- Catalina cherry
- Fruitless olive tree
- Marina strawberry tree

To view a list of additional qualifying species, visit [mwdoc.dropletportal.com/rebate/turf/terms](http://mwdoc.dropletportal.com/rebate/turf/terms).



# Juan's tip of the season.

## Give your landscape a break from summer.

Your landscape went through a lot of stress this summer. Give it a little extra care so it can recuperate this season. Start with your planter beds, rid them of weeds and lay down a nice inch or two of compost. Mix it with your soil as deep as possible using a hoe or garden claw to enrich it with nutrients and improve soil structure. Over winter, nature will do its work and help break down the compost into food for your plants.



# Looking ahead.

## Your garden to-do list.

- **Nursery run:** Visit local nurseries to see what's in stock for the late fall planting season. Consider an organic starter fertilizer when you plant.
- **Sprinkler check:** Fall is the time to reduce watering by 30%. Check your irrigation system for leaks and repair them as soon as possible.
- **Fruit trees:** The best time to plant fruit trees is in late fall. The soil is still warm enough to promote deep root growth, and rain is on the way.

## Rebate help days at The Home Depot!

IRWD landscape guru Juan Garcia is coming to your neighborhood with the Shed Show Road Show. Meet and chat with Juan about ways to make your yard more water friendly, and get help applying for rebates and programs, including up to \$255 for a smart controller.

Events are planned 8 a.m. to noon Oct. 18 at the Irvine Home Depot, and Nov. 1 at the Lake Forest Home Depot. Go to [IRWD.com/events](http://IRWD.com/events) for details, and be sure to stop by.

## Tap our online resources.

Get inspiration for your yard at [yardtopia.com](http://yardtopia.com). Once you have your plan, go to [IRWD.com/rebates](http://IRWD.com/rebates) for rebates to help offset the cost of turf removal, weather-based irrigation controllers, efficient sprinkler heads, drip kits and more.

## Need to contact IRWD?

**Customer Service:** 949-453-5300

**Email:** [info@IRWD.com](mailto:info@IRWD.com)

**Website:** [IRWD.com](http://IRWD.com)

## Join the conversation on social media



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