



# the dirt



SUMMER 2025 GARDENING NEWSLETTER

## Wild spaces, happy faces.

**Build a backyard environment for kids to play, explore and learn.**

Lawns are just a sea of green—static and unremarkable. Why not create a space for your children that fosters curiosity, engagement and social connection—all of which are vital to early childhood development?

Elements such as natural playground equipment, sensory gardens and imaginative sitting areas encourage children to explore sounds, experience textures, develop their eye-brain coordination and build a stronger connection with the natural world.

Design your yard with safety and inclusivity in mind. Ensure that it suits the ages and abilities of the children who will play there, so they all can fully benefit from the experience.



Consider something as simple as a tree stump or rock stepping-stone path with log balance beams alongside a small garden with California-appropriate plants that stimulate sight, smell, sound, touch and even taste. Add to that a natural outdoor classroom, art space or reading area.

For safety, opt for impact-absorbing surface materials like nontoxic shredded rubber mulch, and choose forgiving seat materials made from soft, durable materials rather than wood or metal.

Be sure to carefully assess the area for tripping hazards and ensure that all equipment aligns with the appropriate age group, preventing accidents while promoting enjoyable and developmentally enriching experiences.

Let your imagination go wild. Get ideas at [IRWD.com/landscape](https://www.irwd.com/landscape) and find inspiration at [yardtopia.com](https://www.yardtopia.com).

# The Shed Show.

**IRWD landscape guru and star of *The Shed Show* explains the concept behind the popular video series.**

Juan Garcia



## **Juan Garcia | IRWD Senior Water Efficiency Specialist**

Juan Garcia has more than 20 years of experience in water conservation and water-efficient landscapes — providing tips in his monthly Ask Juan column and sharing his knowledge as the star of *The Shed Show*, an ongoing video series providing landscape solutions and ideas.

### **Why *The Shed Show*?**

**Garcia:** It is a fun way for us to share projects and solutions with our community to help people get the most out of their yards. We cover topics that we get asked about a lot. We try to appeal to the DIYer while also providing tips for those who'd rather hire someone to do the work. *The Shed Show* provides an overall look at gardening, too — from plant selection to checking sprinklers and identifying leaks. There's a little bit for everybody.

### **How does *The Shed Show* relate to what you do every day?**

**Garcia:** Water efficiency goes beyond just fixing a leak. My job is to help educate our customers on things like proper plant selection, planting for the right areas, how to look for issues and get them repaired quickly, and maintaining the overall look of your landscape. I teach workshops on how to make your landscape work for you, and I show people that rethinking your backyard could save money. All these topics are covered in the show.



### **In *The Shed Show*, you talk about creating a Yardtopia™. Can you explain?**

**Garcia:** Implementing just one of the many tips from the episodes could start you on your path toward the yard of your dreams. *The Shed Show* helps you look at your yard in a different way: bringing the indoors outside. It's not just about saving water — it's about beauty and openness and taking advantage of the space you have. Whether you live in a condo with a small patio or a large home with room to grow, you can create a Yardtopia anywhere.

Check out *The Shed Show* and access online resources at [IRWD.com/shedshow](http://IRWD.com/shedshow). Find inspiration at [yardtopia.com](http://yardtopia.com).



# No-hassle landscaping starts here.

Get a smart timer with our rebate, and say goodbye to worrying about your irrigation schedule.



You've upgraded to a smart home, but have you considered making your landscape just as intelligent?

Smart, weather-based irrigation controllers offer effortless control — allowing you to manage watering schedules from anywhere in the world with just a tap. They'll also do the work for you, adjusting automatically for the best schedule based on local weather and your landscape needs.

These controllers integrate seamlessly with other smart home devices, even pausing irrigation when a door opens. Voice control through compatible devices enables easy operation — turning the system on or off, manually running watering zones or setting rain skips — all with simple commands.

Engineered for hassle-free installation, these controllers also feature user-friendly phone apps, making setup and adjustments effortless.

Plus, you may be eligible for a rebate, so be sure to check your eligibility before buying your new smart irrigation controller.

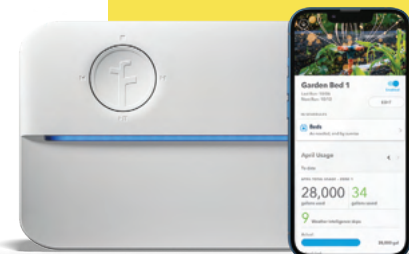
Get up to  
**\$255 with  
our timer  
rebate!**

IRWD is offering up to \$255 in rebates for qualified smart timer purchases — an amount that frequently covers the cost of the device.

Start by going to [IRWD.com/rebates](https://www.irwd.com/rebates) to make sure the device you want to buy is on the list of qualified purchases. If it is, you can buy it and apply!

**Note:** IRWD's bonus rebate will be added to your total rebate amount at the end of the application process.

Questions? Email [WaterEfficiency@IRWD.com](mailto:WaterEfficiency@IRWD.com).





# Juan's tip of the season.

## Protect plants from summer scorch.

Too much sun and heat can stress your landscape and vegetable garden. Your best line of defense is the "right plant, right place" principle of selecting landscape plants that can thrive in direct sunlight.

For your veggie garden, set up a temporary shade structure to protect plants during peak midday and afternoon sun and heat. Keep your plants well-watered, and apply mulch to help retain soil moisture and lower soil temperatures. These simple steps significantly boost plant health. A little care makes a big difference!



# Looking ahead.

## Your garden to-do list.

- **Check your irrigation system:** Watch for clogged nozzles, and replace nozzle filters if needed. For drip systems, flush your drip filters and check for clogged or broken lines.
- **Clean up your landscape:** Remove spent flowers and damaged or diseased stems, branches and foliage. Clear out weeds and apply mulch if needed.
- **Optimize lawn watering:** Water only in early morning to reduce evaporation, and raise your mower height: Longer grass blades shade the soil and save water.



**Join us at one of our summer events!**

This summer, learn how to plant a vegetable garden, take an evening tour of IRWD's San Joaquin Marsh, or a daytime tour of our Michelson Water Recycling Plant. Learn more about these and other events at [IRWD.com/events](http://IRWD.com/events). Be sure to check back as more events are added.

## Tap our online resources.

Get inspiration for your yard at [yardtopia.com](http://yardtopia.com). Once you have your plan in place, 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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