

# News Release

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March 6, 2008

## **“Beautifully Parched” Water Efficient Garden at Canada Blooms four GTA municipalities unite to showcase green garden design & drought-tolerant plants**

Working in collaboration, the four municipalities of Halton Region, Region of Peel, City of Toronto and York Region, together with the Toronto Botanical Garden, have created a water efficient garden to be displayed at Canada Blooms from Wednesday, March 12 to Sunday, March 16 at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, 255 Front St. W.

Visitors to the garden can find out about municipal water efficiency programs and initiatives to help them conserve water and save on their utility bills. They can also book garden visits from experts who will provide landscaping and watering advice aimed at reducing outdoor water use.

In an area where millions of litres of clean drinking water is used to maintain traditional lawns or gardens, the “Beautifully Parched” Water Efficient Garden is an elegant, sophisticated and smart alternative. This garden creatively employs a variety of ecological methods to collect, use and save water while supporting a beautiful and inviting variety of drought-tolerant plants that can thrive during periods where there is no rain.

Pathways separate the garden into four main areas, each of which showcase a different garden style and appropriate plant selections. Where possible, natural and reclaimed materials have been carefully incorporated into the design to emphasize the need for conservation:

- The Wet Garden features a drywell that captures and stores rainwater to support plants that thrive in mostly moist conditions such as moss, primula and ferns.
- The shaded Tree Garden and adjacent Mosaic Circle and Crevice Garden feature shade plants, alpine varieties and hardy plants suitable for nutrient-poor soils. Texture and colour are utilized to show off plants including sedum, thyme, Irish moss, and crocus.
- The Terrace Pottery Garden seeks to educate urban gardeners about the beauty and creativity of water efficient container gardening. Suitable for balconies or small, confined areas, vertical planting of succulents, hops and herbs are chosen for their colour, shape, texture, and easy maintenance.
- The Globe Garden features drought-tolerant evergreens such as boxwood and mint juleps.

“Our region has been increasingly experiencing record breaking summer droughts, so it is important that we start considering alternative landscaping that conserve water resources,” said Margo Welch, Executive Director of the Toronto Botanical Garden. “The ‘Beautifully Parched’ garden is an innovative garden for our changing climate. It shows that careful planning and selection of drought-tolerant plants can create a water efficient garden that is as beautiful as any traditional garden, while being healthy, environmentally friendly, economical, and easy to maintain.”

The “Beautifully Parched” Water Efficient Garden represents the first time all four municipalities: Halton Region, Region of Peel, City of Toronto and York Region have collaborated to educate the public about outdoor water efficiency programs. The garden was created in partnership with the Toronto Botanical Garden, which provided horticultural expertise, and sponsors PMA Landscape Architects, Genus Loci Ecological Landscapes Inc. and Marek Niewiadomski, which provided landscape design expertise and fabricated custom features.

Canada Blooms is the largest flower show in Canada. It is a not-for-profit show that promotes and enhances the awareness of horticulture by featuring the best designs, products and services and an extensive educational series.

Toronto is Canada’s largest city and sixth largest government, and home to a diverse population of about 2.6 million people. It is the economic engine of Canada and one of the greenest and most creative cities in North America. In the past three years, Toronto has won more than 70 awards for quality, innovation and efficiency in delivering public services. Toronto’s government is dedicated to prosperity, opportunity and liveability for all its residents.

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