

WATER WISE

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM MARION COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

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Clean Water Starts Here...

Clean water starts in your yard or garden! It's hard to believe that spring is right around the corner when we've had such a frosty couple of weeks, but we're just over a month away! Use the tips below to help manage your outdoor space in an environmentally friendly way!

- 1) If your soil needs a little something extra, now is the time to mix in 6-8 inches of compost or slow-release organic fertilizer. These are the best methods for preventing harmful runoff and protecting our water.
- 2) Cover all bare soil with straw, hay, cardboard, or mulch. This will help prevent erosion and start your garden off on the right foot.
- 3) If you want a healthy, robust garden this summer, test your soil so you can plan ahead. See the graphic below for more information:



Upcoming Events

Native Plant Sale - March 9, 2019

Bauman Farms - 12989 Howell Prairie Road, Gervais
9:00 am to 4:00 pm

Native plant gardens are good for the local environment, can be low maintenance, and often require less water. Attend the Native Plant Sale to purchase native plants, get free nitrate testing for your well water, and ask Master Gardeners questions about your own personal garden! [Click here](#) for more information.

Drip irrigation for the Home Gardener - March 16, 2019

Marion County Health- 3180 Center St NE, Salem
9:00 am to 11:00 am

Learn how to install a drip irrigation system for your garden! The class is free. [Go to the website](#) for more information, to learn about more events like this, and to register.

IDENTIFY YOUR SOIL TYPE
the jar test

- 1 Fill a clear glass jar halfway with your soil sample.
- 2 Fill the remaining half with water, leaving 1" of air.
- 3 Attach lid, then shake the jar vigorously until you have broken up any clumps of soil.
- 4 Set the jar aside to rest, undisturbed, overnight.

After 24 hours your jar's contents will have settled into distinct layers:

| SAND | SILT | CLAY |
|------|------|------|
|------|------|------|

By examining the proportions of these layers, you can gain a sense of what type of soil you have, and what you need to add to improve your soil. Here are some examples to use for comparison. The middle jar is ideal soil:

| | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 25% clay 25% silt 50% sand | 30% clay 40% silt 30% sand | 50% clay 25% silt 25% sand |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|

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