

ARTIFICIAL TURF RULES FOR WATER-WISE LANDSCAPE REBATE

Design Requirements

The design and installation of all artificial turf is limited to front, back and side yards of single-family detached and single-family attached dwellings. [Please Read City of Thornton Code Pertaining to Artificial Turf.](#)

Figure 452.1 from Thornton City Code

Rear Yard & Enclosed Side Yards	All Other Areas
Artificial turf allowed with no limitations.	Artificial turf shall not exceed 25% of the landscape area. <i>(Front & Unenclosed Side yards not occupied by driveways, sidewalks, patios, decks, buildings, or other structures)</i>

1. A [Minor Development Permit](#) is required prior to the installation of artificial turf as landscaping.
2. The design and installation of all artificial turf areas shall comply with the requirements of the landscape code.
3. Artificial turf shall be installed and maintained to effectively simulate the appearance of a well-maintained lawn.
4. Artificial turf products must include a minimum eight-year warranty against fading.
5. Artificial turf must be a green color, similar to natural grass.

Buffering

The following minimum buffer areas are required between the edge of the artificial turf and the specified location:

1. Three feet from all property lines. Artificial turf may extend to the front property line if a minimum three-foot buffer is installed between the artificial turf and the sidewalk along a street.
2. Eight feet from the front wall of any building, and three feet from all other building walls or impervious surfaces when located outside of the rear or enclosed side yard.
3. Three feet from the trunk of any deciduous tree, and no closer than the dripline of any evergreen tree.

ARTIFICIAL TURF RULES FOR WATER-WISE LANDSCAPE REBATE

4. Buffers shall be permeable, consisting of wood mulch, gravel, or rock a maximum of two inches in diameter, or other approved permeable materials.

Living Plant Materials

1. Living plant materials are required when artificial turf is installed in the front or unenclosed side yard landscape areas of the lot.
2. For the first 750 square feet of artificial turf, or fraction thereof, one tree equivalent is required. One tree equivalent is defined as:
 - One 2-inch diameter deciduous tree
 - One 6-foot-tall evergreen tree
 - 10 #5 shrubs
 - 20 #1 ornamental grasses
3. For each **additional** 250 square feet of artificial turf, or fraction thereof, one-half tree equivalent is required.
4. Required living plant materials may consist of:
 - a. Existing plant materials meeting the requirements of Thornton Code, Section 18-537(d)
 - b. New plant materials installed in accordance with Thornton Code, Section 18-538
 - c. A combination of existing and new materials.

Materials Requirements

1. Artificial turf shall be of a type known as cut pile infill and shall be manufactured from polypropylene, biobased products, nylon, polyester, polyethylene, or a blend of polypropylene, biobased products, nylon, polyester, or polyethylene fibers stitched onto a meshed or hole-punched backing made of similar materials. Biobased products are derived from plants and other agricultural, marine, and forestry materials, and may be certified as a USDA Bio-Preferred product.
2. Hole-punched backings shall have holes spaced in a uniform grid pattern with spacing not to exceed four inches by six inches on center.
3. Backings shall be designed to drain at a minimum rate of two inches per hour.
4. The use of indoor or outdoor carpeting in replacement of artificial turf, mulch or other plant material is not permitted.

PFAS-free Requirements

All artificial turf, infill, and other manufactured products used in the installation of artificial turf shall be free of per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS).

ARTIFICIAL TURF RULES FOR WATER-WISE LANDSCAPE REBATE

PFAS-free means that at least one of the following requirements have been met:

1. The manufacturer or distributor has publicly stated that the product is made without the intentional use of PFAS in a statement referring to all members of the class of PFAS using language such as “PFAS-free,” “fluorocarbon-free,” “per- and poly-fluorinated compounds-free,” and similar. “PFC-free” shall not be sufficient to satisfy this requirement. The statement must explicitly address which product or products it applies to, and ambiguous statements will not be accepted.
2. The product has been tested and shown to be PFAS-free. Testing sufficient to satisfy this requirement may have been carried out at the manufacturer’s request or as a part of an independent investigation by a nongovernmental organization, research laboratory, or other entity not affiliated with the company. Testing completed by the manufacturer does not satisfy this requirement. Testing results must be published online and must indicate the test method used and the specific product tested. Third-party certifications are not valid as “PFAS-free” unless the testing evaluates total organic fluorine and results are publicly available.
3. Documentation evidencing that the proposed product is PFAS-free shall be submitted at the time of permit application and approval of such documentation is at the sole discretion of the director or designee.
4. Additional restrictions or standards may be adopted in writing by the director due to the rapidly evolving science around the presence of PFAS.
5. If a product is installed that is later determined to contain PFAS, that product may remain in place so long as the applicant complied with the PFAS-free documentation requirements.

Installation

1. Sod or existing groundcover will need to be removed prior to installation of any artificial turf.
2. Artificial turf must be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications and maintained in a manner to mimic healthy living turf.
3. Sub-base must be a minimum three inches deep of compacted aggregate material, which may be a combination of coarse and fine material layers separated by a geotextile per the manufacturer’s specifications. The specified base material(s) system must be able to contain a minimum of one-half inch of precipitation prior to generating sheet flow runoff.
4. Artificial turf must be anchored at all edges and seams, using pins/nails recommended by manufacturer.
5. All artificial turf seams will be glued and not sewn.

ARTIFICIAL TURF RULES FOR WATER-WISE LANDSCAPE REBATE

6. An infill medium consisting of clean washed sand and/or ground shells may be brushed into the fibers to ensure that the fibers remain in an upright position and to provide ballast that will help hold the turf in place and provide a cushioning effect. Infill is not required if the artificial turf manufacturer does not recommend or require its use.

General Maintenance

Artificial turf shall be maintained in a manner to mimic healthy living turf. General maintenance requirements are specified in Section 18-556 of Thornton City Code. In addition, the following maintenance activities are required for artificial turf:

1. Cleaning, sanitizing, brushing, and removal of debris. Cleaning shall be done with biodegradable products.
2. Hand raking of worn turf areas on an as needed basis.
3. Repairing of depressions to maintain an even visual surface.
4. Brushing back any loose infill that has been washed or moved off the turf.
5. Regular maintenance to eliminate any odors, flat or matted areas, weeds, looseness at edges, seams, or elsewhere.
6. Replacement of the artificial turf when maintenance or repair is unable to simulate a healthy living turf.

Rebate Requirements

1. The residential water-wise landscape rebate provides up to \$2 per square foot for qualifying projects of 200 – 1,000 square feet. The rebate has a lifetime maximum of \$2,000 per residential lot. To qualify for the rebate, artificial turf must replace an area of high-water demand lawn, such as Kentucky Bluegrass, on existing residential lots or areas of no landscaping on new construction residential lots.
2. A [Minor Development Permit](#) approval is required prior to the installation of artificial turf as landscaping. Please contact Planning Department's Planner of the Day for details. E-mail POD.info@thorntonco.gov or call 303-538-7295.
3. Qualifying projects must be between 200 - 1,000 square feet and must meet the requirements of the Landscape Code.
4. Get HOA Approval. Submit your design to your HOA for review and approval, if applicable.
5. The use of artificial turf materials on existing hardscape such as patios or side-yard concrete driveways or pathways will not qualify for the rebate.

ARTIFICIAL TURF RULES FOR WATER-WISE LANDSCAPE REBATE

6. Submit design with the [Water-Wise Landscape Rebate application](#).
7. Submit signed copy of IRS W9 form - <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf>
8. Submit a copy of your driver's license.
9. Submit receipts of all purchased material including but not limited to sub-base material, artificial turf, seaming materials along with infill materials if applicable for project must be submitted to be eligible for rebate.
10. If applicable, please provide professional installers contact information.
11. All Thornton City Code requirements for artificial turf installation must be met to qualify for a rebate.
12. Take "before, during and after" photos of your project area and submit with the Water-Wise Landscape Rebate application.

Have questions? E-mail Water@ThorntonWater.com or call 720-977-6600.