

Conservation Profiles



Sunrise Country Club looks younger with desert landscape

In 2009, Sunrise Country Club replaced turf and annual flowers with water-efficient plants, decomposed granite, decorative rocks and drip irrigation systems throughout the 36-year-old country club.

This landscape conversion project included the areas around the main clubhouse and its outdoor seating; perimeters around tennis courts and parking lots; a 3,960-foot median; and 40 intersection corners. Additionally, the country club put in two-foot setbacks under pool fencing at 21 pool areas. Five demonstration yards were also installed to encourage homeowners to convert to desert-friendly landscaping.



Sunshine Landscape was hired to install the new landscaping, drip irrigation systems and five demonstration yards. The total cost of this conversion project was \$77,000.

"This conversion will save significant dollars," says Sunrise Country Club General Manager Bill Athan. "We should recuperate our money back within the next five years, just in road repair costs."

Before the conversion, the club was repairing its roads annually because of water damage from sprinkler run-off from the turf on club medians. When grass and spray head sprinklers are planted and installed on hard to irrigate areas such as medians, corners, strips or slopes, most of the water is wasted on streets and sidewalks.



"I would get to the country club at 6 a.m. every morning just after the sprinklers were running and it looked like the Colorado River," Bill says.

The country club expects to save a significant amount of water over time with this conversion. Other savings the club will benefit from include the cost of fertilizer, equipment, overseeding, labor and water damage repairs to roads and walls. Since the country club completed its conversion projects, 20 homeowners have converted their yards from grass to desert landscaping. Although residents convert their yards at their own expense, Sunrise Country Club offers to maintain their yards as an incentive

Landscape Committee Chairman Ira Laufer says the club's residents have been extremely supportive and are pleased with the outcome of the project.

"Residents have given nothing but praise and support," says Ira. "One resident told me that the conversion to desert landscape makes the place look much younger."