Grow Your Gardening Skills
Community Garden Water Audit

Date: ________________  Garden Name: ________________________

**Watering Techniques and Tools**
*Does your community garden group…*

— Water early in the morning or the evening? Avoid evaporation caused by the afternoon heat.
— Use a soaker hose?
— Use hand-watering practices with a watering can or spray nozzle?
— Apply water directly to the base of the plant where the plant needs it most, its roots?
— Use a drip irrigation system?
— Use a rain gauge to determine amount of rainwater captured naturally on site? Edible gardens typically only need one inch of water per week to thrive. Perennial gardens need even less
— Use high quality hoses, spray nozzles and other tools that help reduce leaks and inefficiencies?
— Regularly inspect the lawn hydrant and hose connection for leaks and inefficiencies?
— Turn the water off AT THE SOURCE every time?
— Use recycled water from a rain barrel instead of the faucet?
— Have a water conservation plan?
— Train the garden team to implement water conservation best practices?

**Gardening Techniques**
*Does your community garden group…*

— Group plants by water requirements?
— Adjust water levels according to plant specific water needs an microclimates?
— Choose drought-tolerant and/or native perennials as a conservation strategy?
— Use intensive planting techniques?
— Review the soil quality and drainage rate in each growing area?
— Check soil moisture levels before watering? Dig down two-three inches to check for moisture.
— Apply compost and organic matter to the growing beds annually? Improved soil quality is the secret to plant health **AND** water conservation.
— Apply mulch to the growing beds annually? Mulch helps retain soil moisture by 70%, inhibits weed growth and prevents erosion.

Work with your garden team to develop a water conservation that works for your site. Including at least three practices from each section each year as a way to reduce water usage. Contact NeighborSpace for advice.