

## Estes Valley Community Garden (EVCG) 2025 – Rules and Policies



*These rules and policies are established for the benefit of all Community Gardeners to help make gardening an enjoyable and satisfying experience.*

The EVGC is a non-profit organization that relies on multiple funding resources beyond the rental plot fees. These funding resources include grants in which the number of volunteer hours worked each year is a key component to successfully winning grants. It is very important therefore that Gardeners be provided with varied volunteering opportunities, and that records of volunteer activity be documented on specially prepared forms inside the shed *EACH AND EVERY TIME* volunteer work is performed.

### *Gardeners' Responsibilities:*

1. All new Gardener's must attend Orientation. Returning Gardeners are encouraged to attend. Dates and times will be announced via the EVCG Website ([www.evgc.org](http://www.evgc.org)) and emails.
2. Gardeners are responsible for planning, planting (seeds and/or plants), supplemental watering, and weeding their own garden plots.
3. Remove grass, weeds, trash and similar unwanted and/or unsightly items from the immediate area around your assigned plot. Place these into suitable trash containers and take them home for disposal. NEVER LEAVE ORGANIC WASTES OR TRASH AT THE COMMUNITY GARDEN. DOING SO ATTRACTS RODENTS.
4. NEVER REMOVE OR TAKE ANYTHING FROM ANOTHER GARDENER'S PLOT WITHOUT THEIR EXPRESS CONSENT. STEALING IS NOT TOLERATED and will be grounds for immediate License termination.
5. If you cannot begin working on your plot by June 1, please notify the Board at [evcg@evcg.org](mailto:evcg@evcg.org). By providing written notice to EVCG on or before June 1, 2025, a Gardener may terminate the License and Contract and receive a full refund of fees paid. If notification occurs after June 1, 2025, a Gardener shall not be entitled to any refund.
6. Unattended plots may result in forfeiture of gardening privileges for the following year.

7. Gardeners are expected to volunteer a minimum of two hours during the growing season AND to help during scheduled work events usually in spring and fall. Opportunities, announced on the white board at the shed, through periodic emails, and the EVCG Website “Volunteer Resources” tab include a wide range of activities and varying degrees of physical demand. These include general clean-up, mowing or weed-whacking, rodent control, maintenance or construction projects, watering, delivering produce to Crossroads, checking the quality of overnight watering, serving on an EVCG committee, or helping with special events.
8. The recording of volunteer hours is important for the purpose of writing and winning grants. As such, Gardener agrees to record work hours each time work is performed on the appropriate forms located in the shed.
9. Gardeners are encouraged to supply their own tools. Some tools are owned by the Community Garden and stored in the shed. Please clean and return them to the shed after use.
10. Gardeners who want to cover crops to extend the growing season are responsible for materials and maintenance.
11. Hail cloth, plastics, and other items that could be loosened by the wind ARE NOT permitted between October 31 and April 1.
12. Gardeners are responsible for closing their plots on or before October 31 each growing season. This includes the removal of all plant material including all root vegetables and all annuals. EVCG Board cannot guarantee returning Gardeners will be assigned the same plot the following year.

### *Garden Plot Assignments: Returning Gardeners*

1. All Gardeners who want to renew for the following growing season should respond to an EVCG email inquiry that is usually sent between mid-March to mid-April. This email provides instructions and a License application to be completed and returned. Notifications will also generally be announced in the EP News and posted on the EVCG website. Returning Gardeners are always welcomed to contact us for up-to-date information by emailing [evcg@evcg.org](mailto:evcg@evcg.org).
2. Garden plots are issued on a first-come and first-served basis. Gardeners who wish to return cannot be guaranteed a plot, or that they will be given the same plot, although every effort will be made to fulfill those wishes.

3. To be considered for a plot, Returning Gardeners must complete and sign a new application and submit the appropriate fees no later than April 30<sup>th</sup>.
4. The fee for the 2025 growing season is \$80. The fee is non-refundable after June 1. It is used to support the *administrative expenses* (such as insurance, rent, banking, state registration, website, PO Box rental etc.), *operational expenses* (such as water, mowing and trimming, pest control, maintenance and upkeep, etc.) and *events and publicity expenses* (such as food and drink for the annual Potluck dinner, and volunteers such as the YMCA Elevate Gap program.)
5. Any number of adults (18 and over) may share one garden plot. All names must be listed on the signed 2025 – License and Contract.
6. EVCG Board and EVCG donors and/or sponsors must also go through the same application process each growing season along with everyone else. We all must pay our fair share.
7. There are some reserved dedicated plots, for example: Crossroads Ministry's Food Bank, Girl Scouts, and the local Elementary School.
8. Tall garden plots are reserved for seniors (65 or up) and those with special needs.

### *Garden Plot Application Procedures for New Gardeners:*

1. Residents wishing to become new gardeners are generally made aware of the opportunity through three primary sources. These include public announcements in the EP News. Postings found on the EVCG website. And, most often, through word-of-mouth.
2. The easiest, fastest, and most assured way for new gardeners to obtain a plot (given that plots are assigned on a first-come and first-served basis) is to download a License application from the website at [evcg.org](http://evcg.org) by clicking the link "Get A Plot." Applications should be printed, completed, signed, and sent to EVCG along with all applicable fees to PO Box 4158, Estes Park, CO 80517. The fee for the 2025 growing season is \$80.email
3. Applicants may also request an application by emailing us at [evcg@evcg.org](mailto:evcg@evcg.org). Special arrangements can be made to speak to an EVCG representative and/or meet an EVCG representative at the Community Garden to answer any questions applicants may have.
4. New garden applications are accepted at any time. Should the garden be full, applicants will be placed on a waiting list. Garden plots are awarded from the waitlist in the order in which they were received.

*Garden Etiquette:*

1. Parking is available in two lots close to the Community Garden east and west gate entrances. The East entrance is located by the tennis courts. The west entrance is located off Community Drive. DO NOT PARK ANYWHERE ON MANFORD AVENUE.
2. Both entrances are locked with COMBINATION locks. Gardeners will receive the combinations after signed applications and license fees have been received and garden plots have been assigned.
3. *PLEASE DO NOT SHARE THE COMBINATION WITH ANYONE.* Several suspected thefts from Garden plots have occurred in recent growing seasons. The EVCG Board is asking every Gardener, both new and returning, to be aware of this problem and to become part of the solution.
4. Be respectful of your fellow Gardeners. Make sure you are gardening in your own plot!
5. It should go without saying, but it is never appropriate to bully fellow gardeners or to make them feel unwelcome in any way. It is especially egregious to use the EVCG email system as a means of promoting derisive language, insulting fellow Gardeners and Board members, and otherwise promoting an atmosphere of divisiveness and hate. Any such verbal or written speech will not be tolerated and is means for immediate loss of garden privileges.
6. Children are welcome in the Community Garden provided they are supervised by an adult.
7. Organic wastes (plant materials and noxious weeds) will be collected and disposed of at "Start-Up Day" in spring and "Clean-Up Day" in fall. During the growing season, however, please gather your organic and any other waste in a suitable container and take it home for proper disposal.
8. PLEASE DO NOT PUT GREEN WASTE IN THE CONTAINER OUTSIDE THE SHED. This container is in dire need of replacement. It is scheduled to be removed. In previous years green waste was collected and removed as a service for gardeners. But, due to insufficient volunteer help, waste often accumulated, becoming unsightly, and causing insect and rodent infestations. The Board would like to reinstitute that program. But to do so, sufficient volunteers who are physically capable of moving the waste AND who have the vehicles necessary for the task must be identified.
9. To help keep the garden looking its best, and to prevent giving destructive rodents (ground squirrels, mice, and voles) a ready food source and protective cover, please be sure to continually remove weeds and keep unwanted outside vegetation in a perimeter of 1 foot around your garden plot. This effort will reduce the occurrence of unwanted

pests. It will be very helpful to mow and weed-whacking volunteers. And it will ensure your personal property (plants, piping, and hail cloth) is not damaged by mowing operations.

10. Each Gardener assigned Plot must be cleared of debris with no vegetation, including any vegetation around the immediate area at the base of the plot, by October 31, 2025.
11. Garden Policies, included as an Addendum to this License, also govern visitors using EVCG facilities or services. Gardeners must ensure both Gardeners and visitors comply with these policies.
12. Gardeners should have no physical or medical condition that affects their capability to participate in EVCG activities, events, and services, and is not participating against medical advice.
13. The Community Garden is a non-smoking area.
14. Service dogs, wearing an identifying harness, are welcome; otherwise, NO PETS are allowed inside the fenced garden plots.
15. Use headphones if you are gardening with music.
16. Be mindful of the shade impact of taller crops (such as sunflowers) on neighboring garden plots. Gardeners who plant sunflowers should take personal responsibility in removing the stalks in the fall as they are often difficult for many volunteers to remove. Trees of any kind are not permitted to be planted in Garden Plots. They will eventually grow to the point of impinging upon and shading neighboring plots.
17. The planting of perennials, such as rhubarb, currants, and raspberries is allowed. But Gardeners must be aware that the Board cannot guarantee gardeners will receive the same plot in following years. Additionally, EVCG cannot be held responsible for the health of perennials should they need to be moved for garden maintenance and improvement operations. As such, Gardeners should exercise discretion when deciding when and if to plant perennials. They must take full responsibility for perennial removal if that must occur.
18. Marijuana may not be grown in the Community Garden.
19. Be mindful of any set rodent traps. Keep children, and your own fingers, safe.

*Gardening Guidelines:*

1. For the safety and enjoyment of everyone, the Community Garden is CHEMICAL-FREE.
  - a. Use only organic products for fertilizer and pest control. Organic seeds or plant starters are optional due to availability and cost concerns.
  - b. Chemical fertilizers, pesticides, or herbicides are prohibited. Use Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) approved products. Mulching between planted areas is encouraged alongside any organic fertilizer or compost.
  - c. No fresh manure or aged manure from stables may be used in the garden plots. Many weed seeds remain viable in manure and plant growth is easily spread. Commercially processed compost is allowed.
  - d. Weeds should be pulled by hand and covered with organic mulch. Copies of an Estes Valley noxious weed identification booklet are available in the shed.
  - e. There is currently no composting in the garden. Composting options may be explored for the future.
2. Water Systems and Usage
  - a. A drip irrigation system is attached to all plots. Six zones are watered in rotation. A schedule and zone map can be found in the shed. Notify the Operations Team *as soon as possible* if you notice leaks or damage to any part of the water system by calling call one of the emergency numbers posted in the shed. As a last resort, email us at [EVCg@evcg.org](mailto:EVCg@evcg.org). DO NOT CHANGE OR ALTER THE DRIP IRRIGATION SYSTEM unless you are trained and have authorization to do so!
  - b. Hoses and nozzles are provided for Gardener use. Use them as sparingly as possible but do use them enough for your plot's success. Water in the Community Garden is provided by the Town of Estes Park, and it is expensive. On an annual basis, water is one of our largest expenses.
  - c. Please do not let your children play in the water!
  - d. Be mindful and do not drag hoses through other garden plots. Try not to spray onto adjacent plots. When finished, return the rolled-up hose to the frame provided AND make sure the water is TURNED OFF.
  - e. Get to know your neighbors and discuss whether they would like a little neighborly assistance in watering their plots during excessively hot and dry periods and/or when they may be away.

- f. The water system will be turned off in the fall as determined by weather conditions by the Estes Valley Recreation and Park District (EVPRD). Gardeners will be notified when the water is turned off.

### *Feedback and Questions:*

The Estes Valley Community Garden Board of Directors seeks gardener feedback. Periodic garden satisfaction surveys are conducted to gather information, address ongoing issues, and improve the Community Garden.

Contact the Board by emailing [evcg@evcg.org](mailto:evcg@evcg.org). We strive to provide a timely response.

*Rev. March 2025*