



*Adorn Your Home*

**i**LLUMINATIONS  
the art of lighting

325-3031 · 3527 E. FT. LOWELL

IN THE FT. LOWELL  
FURNITURE DISTRICT  
JUST WEST OF DODGE

## THE GREEN PAGES

# ask a **green** thumb

**Gardening experts answer your questions**

COMPILED BY **CRISTIÁN A. SIERRA**



COURTESY OF JASON ISENBERG

**Q** Can you give me some tips on designing a really great backyard on a budget?

~Anne Rajotte

**A** Do-it-yourselfers beware: The road to a completed landscape is fraught with peril. Incorrect plant choices, improperly installed irrigation systems, and out-of-date design elements will cost you more in the long run—both in money and in headaches. The best bet is following a few tried and true steps.

First, have a plan and use it as your road map. Landscape blueprints allow you to make the best use of your money, permitting a phased approach to landscape installation that does not look haphazardly pieced together. Also, use a good

landscape designer as you would a travel guide. They'll be able to tell you what plant material works best in your space so that your overall design makes sense.

Next, in the Southwest it's imperative to install irrigation. Many homeowners will try and cut costs by committing to hand watering instead of automatic irrigation systems. Don't do it. Your plants will suffer and your yard will be in shambles. If you purchase a home with an existing irrigation system, consult a landscape contractor to make sure the system was installed properly.

Finally, whatever you do—maintain, maintain, maintain. Nothing can crush your spirits or the overall health of your landscape like neglect. Regular weeding, fertilizing, and pruning are essential to ensure the investment in your landscape not only survives, but also thrives.

**Jason Isenberg**, owner, Urban Organics Landscaping, 791-9131, [www.uolandscaping.com](http://www.uolandscaping.com)