

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Ecological Landscaping Demo Kicks Off in Portland's Back Cove

(PORTLAND, MAINE – SEPTEMBER 18, 2006) City of Portland Mayor James Cohen will be joined by other officials to help launch Maine's first public YardScape, 10:00 am on Tuesday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, in Portland's Back Cove. The YardScape will be a 2.5-acre site showcasing plantings and landscaping that are low-maintenance and ecologically sound. The YardScape is situated adjacent to the Preble Street soccer fields and parking lot.

"Portland is honored to have been selected for this extremely important demo site," notes Mayor Cohen. "Working with the State and a host of private and non-profit organizations, we're eager to show homeowners how easy it can be to have yards and gardens that reduce the need for water, fertilizer and pesticides."

Also speaking at the event will be Ned Porter, Deputy Commissioner at the Department of Agriculture, Food & Rural Resources; Cathy Ramsdell, Executive Director of Friends of Casco Bay; and Gary Fish, Certification Specialist with the Maine Board of Pesticides Control and YardScaping spokesperson. More than 25 organizations are already allied in the YardScaping Partnership, including state agencies, municipalities, nurseries, colleges and environmental groups.

"Part of the reason this site has been selected," says FOCB's Cathy Ramsdell, "is that all of Casco Bay, and particularly Back Cove, receives the runoff from thousands of yards and lawns in Greater Portland. Friends of Casco Bay has detected a number of toxic chemicals in this water, and we're convinced that YardScaping principles applied neighborhood by neighborhood can make an immediate difference in the cleanliness of stormwater that flows into our coastal waters."

Once the Back Cove YardScaping site is completed it will showcase appropriate plantings in urban, suburban and rural settings, each demonstrating how homeowners can easily design and install low-maintenance lawns and landscapes that rely on common-sense pest management, reduce reliance on pesticides, fertilizers and water (and their runoff), support wildlife and promote native and non-invasive plants.

While the project is partially funded by a \$35,000 Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency, the event also marks the start of a major fundraising campaign to raise additional funds for items not covered by the grant, including site preparation and the purchase of plants.

For more information on YardScaping and the Back Cove project, go to [www.yardscaping.org](http://www.yardscaping.org) and [www.yardscaping.org/press](http://www.yardscaping.org/press).

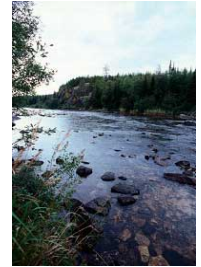
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# The Facts on YardScaping

## YardScaping improves water quality

Carpet-like lawns add value and enjoyment to any home, but they come at a tremendous cost to our environment. The pesticides and fertilizers you apply to your yard may wind up in our waterways. At risk are lakes, streams and eventually the ocean. In Casco Bay, from 2001–2005, pesticides found include diazinon, clopyralid, MCPP, dicamba, propiconazole, 2, 4-D and MCPA.



## YardScaping is healthier for people, pets and wildlife

Too often people think pesticides are “safe” because they can be bought at the hardware store. Not true! Pesticides are designed to be toxic—that means they kill something. If used incorrectly, a pesticide could pose risks to people, pets and beneficial creatures and plants. **YARDSCAPING** allows you to grow lawns and landscapes that create better habitats and demand less of any chemical.



## YardScaping saves you money

Shrinking the size of your lawn and growing hardy plants reduces out-of-pocket costs: gasoline, pesticides, fertilizers, water, plants and planting materials. Plus, preserving nearby natural resources, like coves and lakes, from polluting chemicals increase the value of your property.



## YardScaping saves you time

There are 20 million acres of lawn in the US—how much do *you* need? Growing a **YARDSCAPE**, using low maintenance plants on only the amount of lawn your lifestyle needs, adds up to more play time for you.



## YardScaping reduces air pollution

Reducing your lawn to the size you really need is YardScaping 101. Using a power mower consumes fossil fuels and causes pollution: one power mower = 40 cars. In fact, a lawnmower pollutes as much in one hour as an automobile driving 350 miles.



It is estimated the average American spends 40 hours every year mowing their lawn.

## YardScaping makes a statement!

A landscape rich in diverse vegetation is unique. It expresses a property's own character. Better yet, a lush **YARDSCAPER** property conveys an important message about aesthetics: environmental responsibility is always in good taste.

