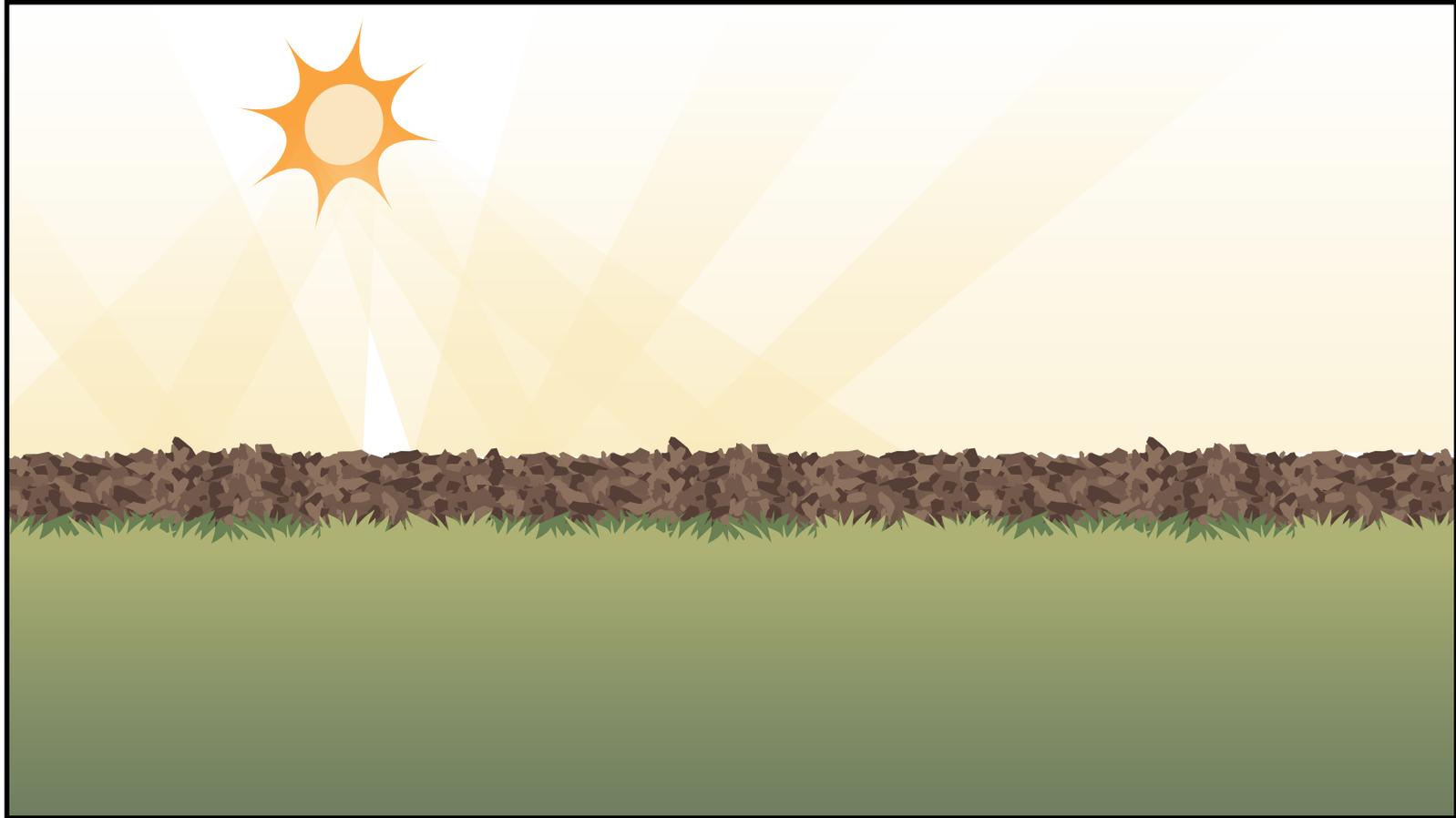


A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO SHEET MULCHING



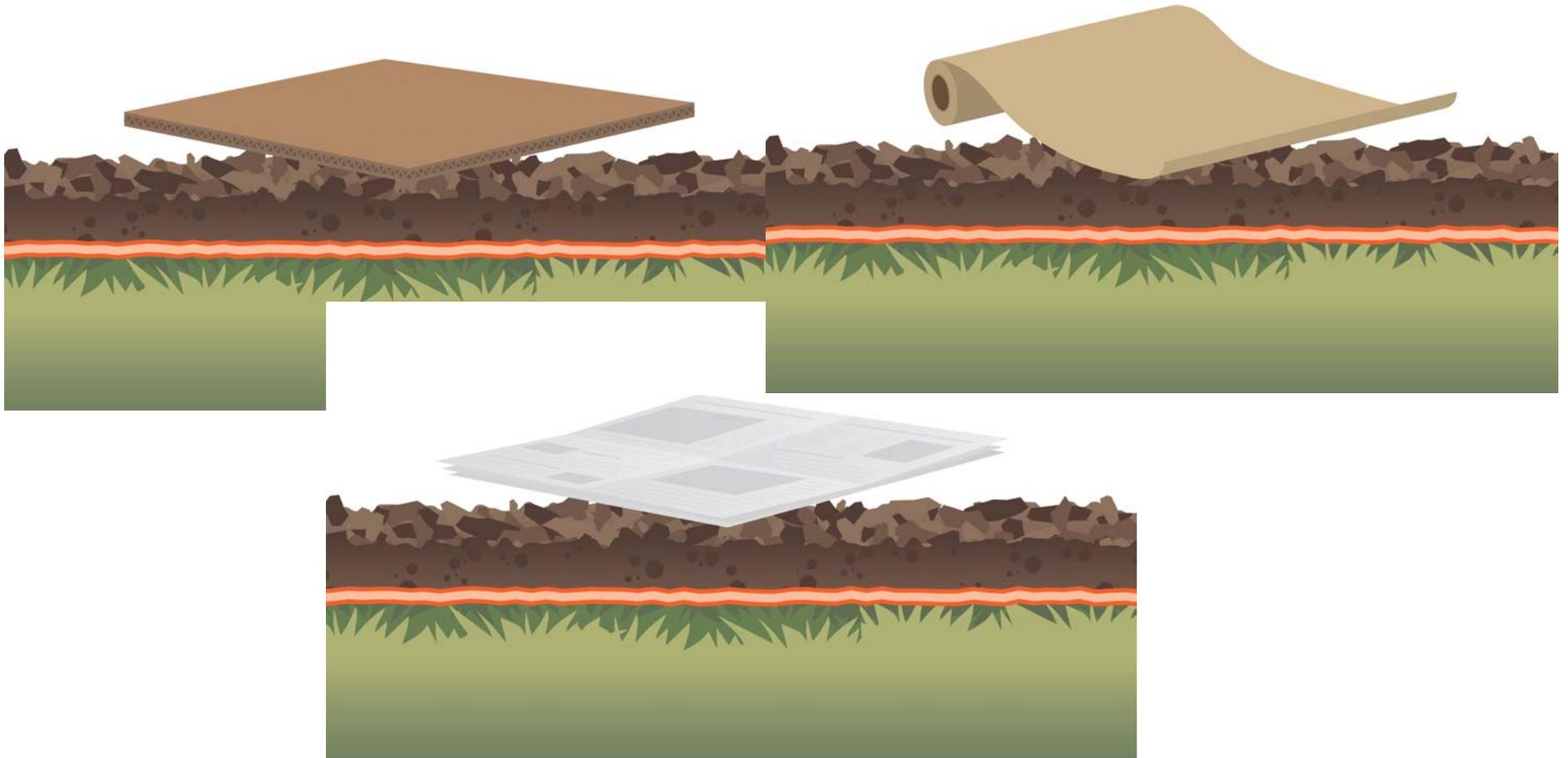
This video will guide you through the steps for using sheet mulching to kill your grass.

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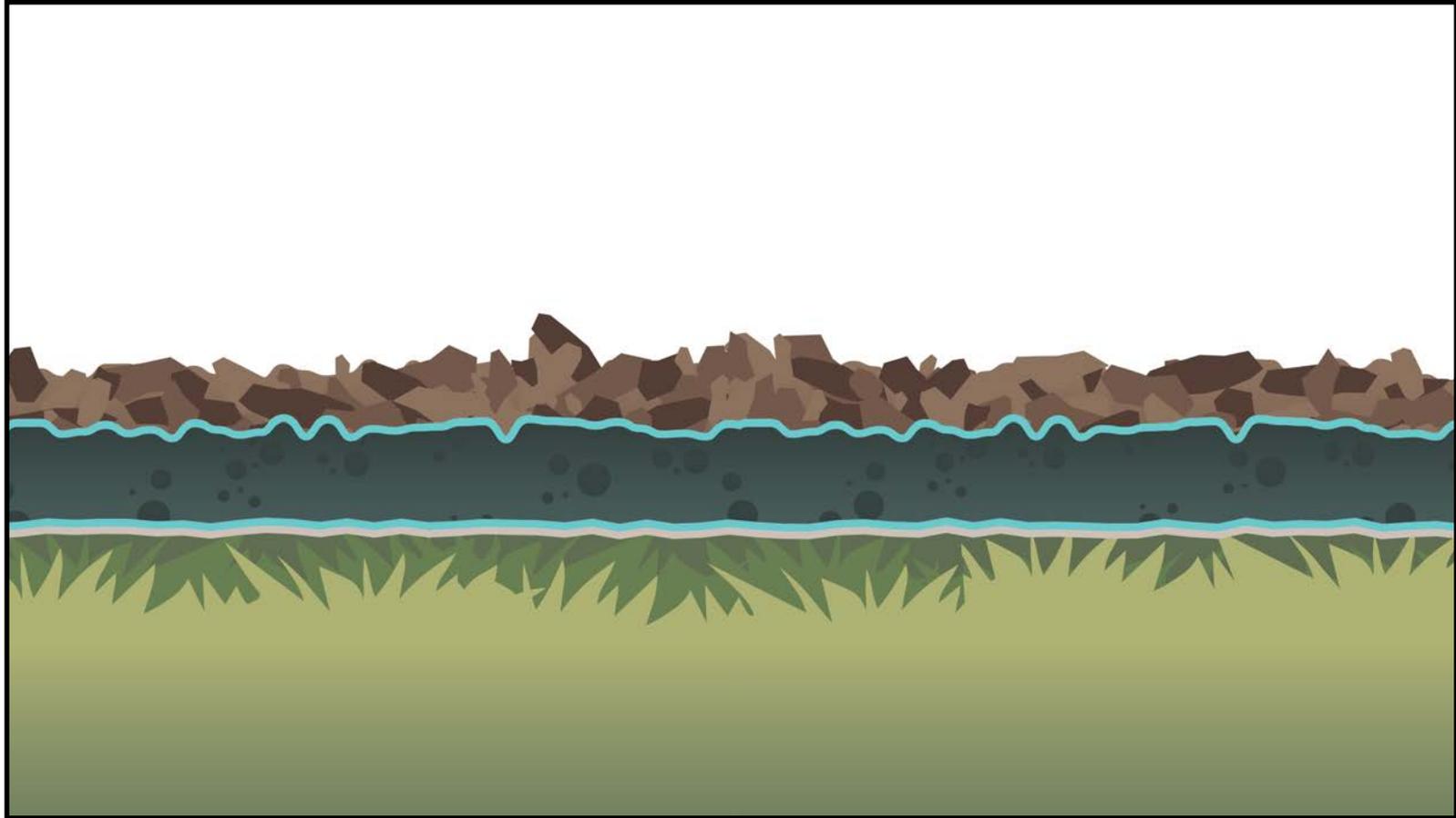
Sheet mulching uses layers to block sunlight which will stop your lawn from growing.

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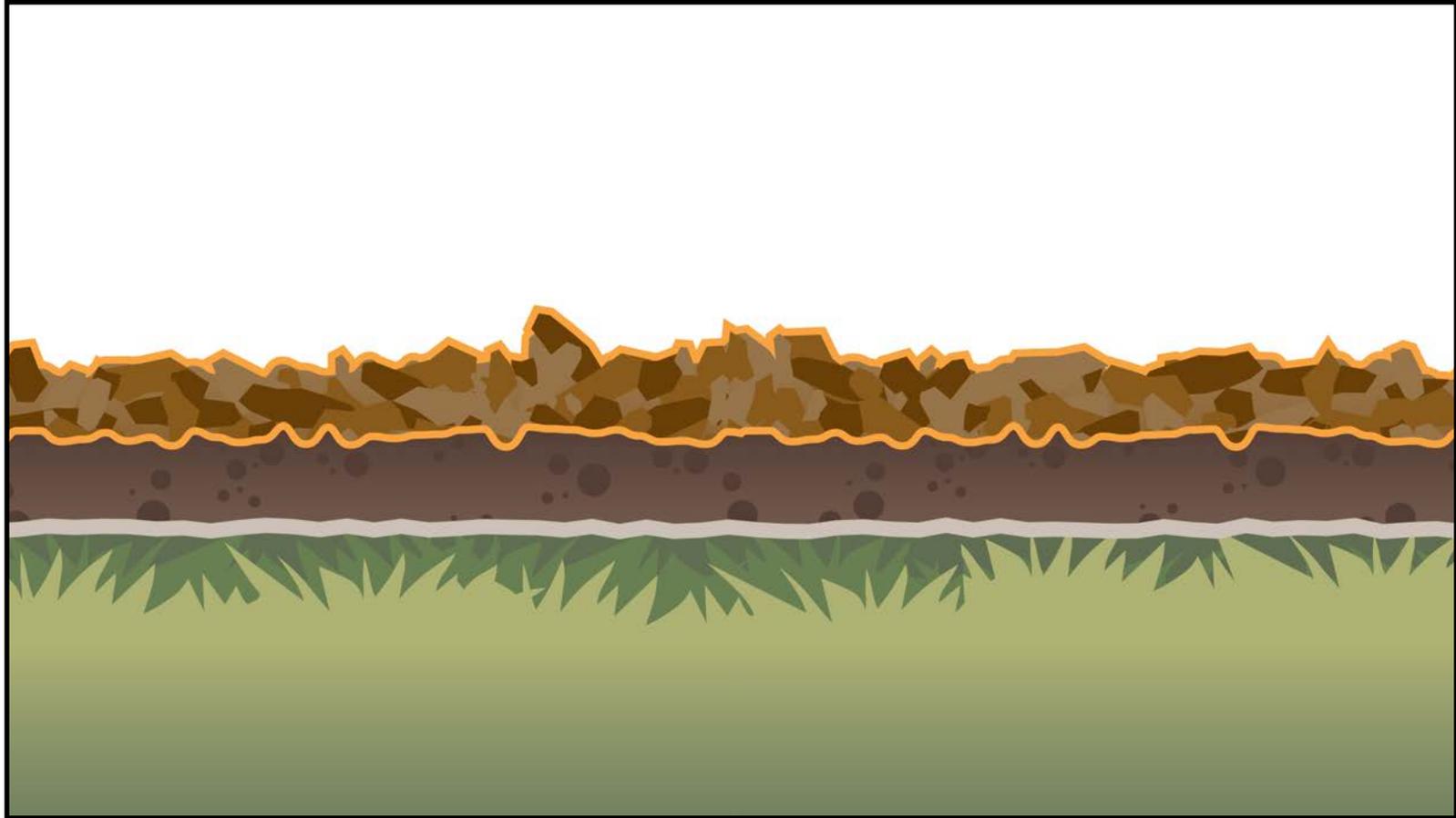
The first layer is a biodegradable weed barrier. This is usually cardboard, multiple layers of newspaper or builder's paper that is placed directly on the ground.

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A thick layer of either compost or manure, or a combination of both, is used to cover the cardboard or newspaper.

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Finally, a layer of mulch, like wood chips, is placed over the top.

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Layering allows water to move through the material to the grass below, causing the grass to decompose over time.

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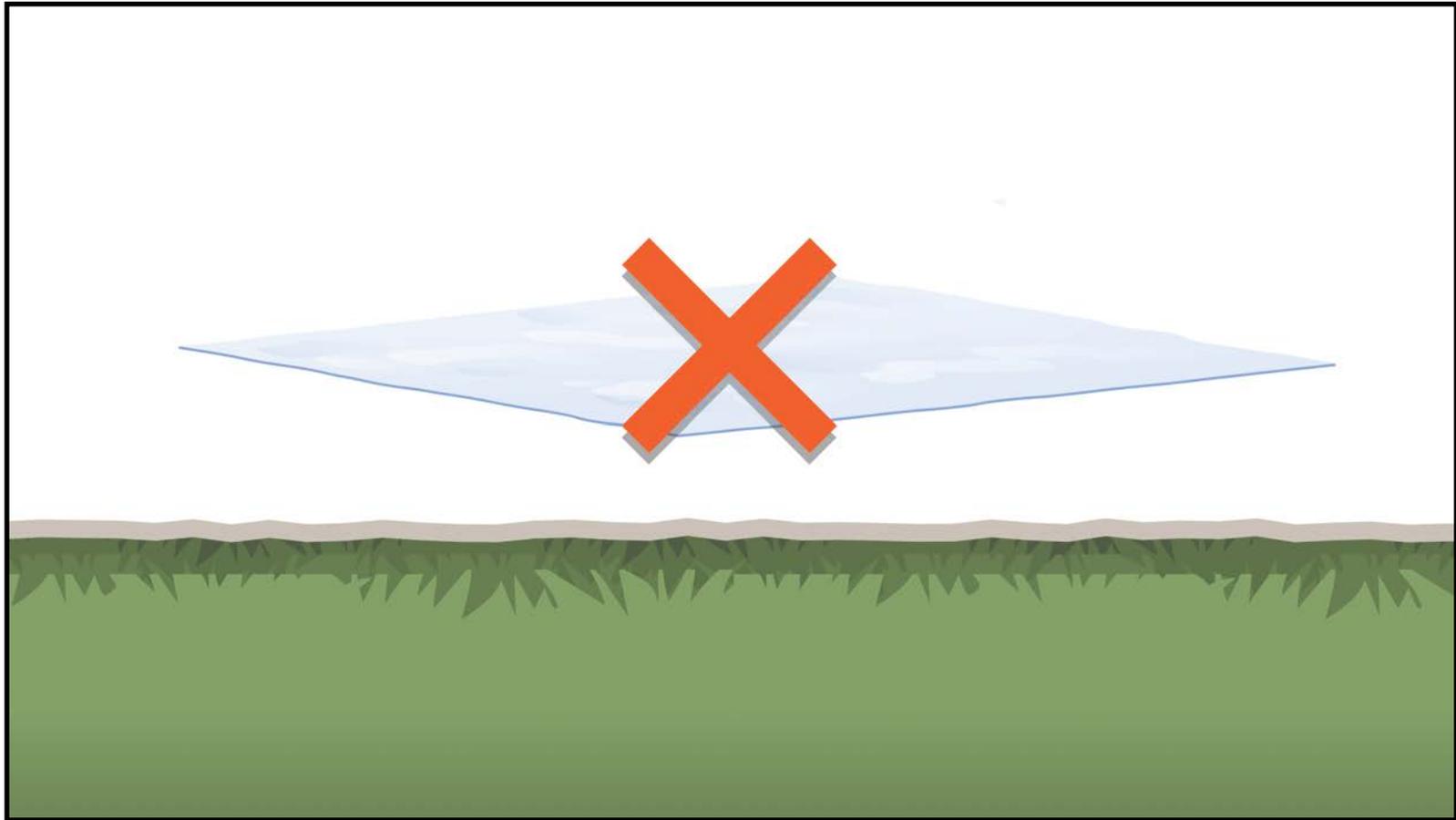
What are the benefits of sheet mulching? It improves soil health, leaves zero green waste and doesn't involve heavy equipment or pesticides. Sheet mulching also minimizes weeds.

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You will need the following materials: A shovel, a hose, biodegradable weed barrier such as cardboard or paper, compost, and mulch.

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Do not use plastic for this process — it is not biodegradable.

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Step one: Measure and calculate the size of the area you would like to sheet mulch so that you know the amount of cardboard or newspaper you will need.

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Cardboard or newspaper should overlap at least six inches to avoid light penetration. Remember to include that overlap space in your material estimates.

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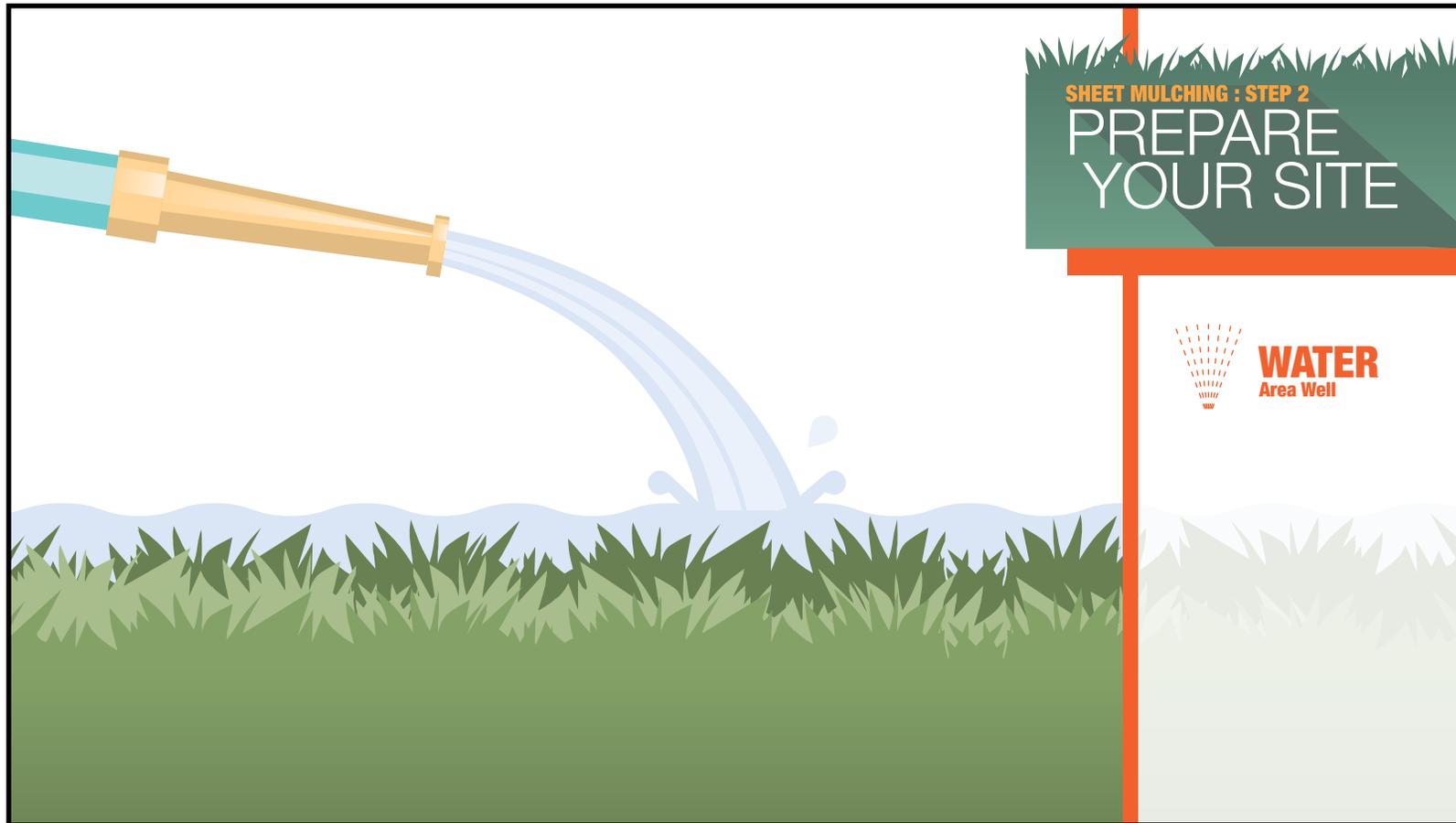
You will need enough compost to cover the area at least five to six inches deep. Cubic calculators are available online to determine the amount of material you will need.

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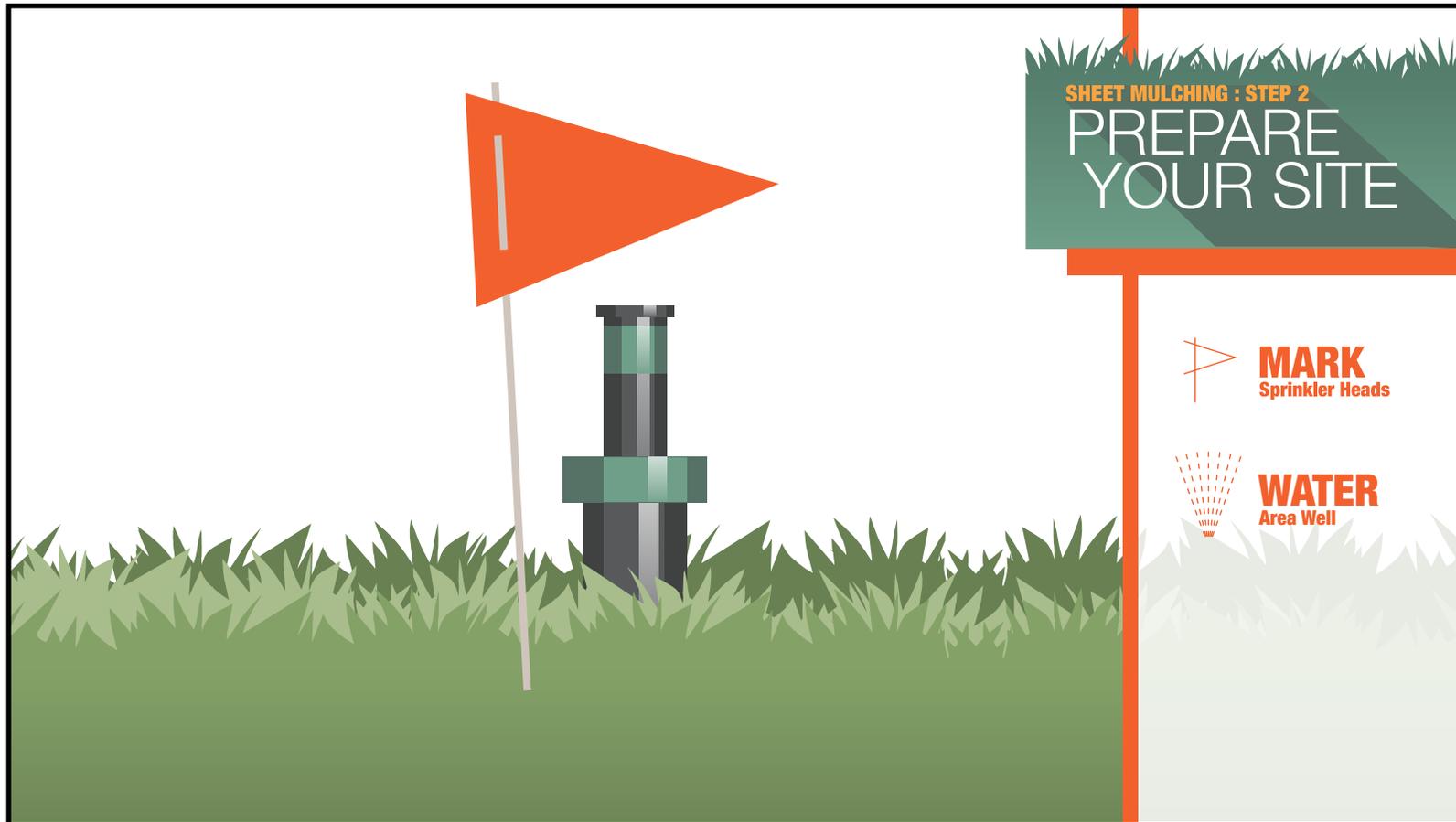
Step two: Prepare your site.

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Water the area well before you begin.

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Mark any sprinkler heads to avoid damaging them, and for future conversion to drip irrigation.

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Mow your lawn very short, or flatten or chop down existing vegetation, leaving clippings on site.

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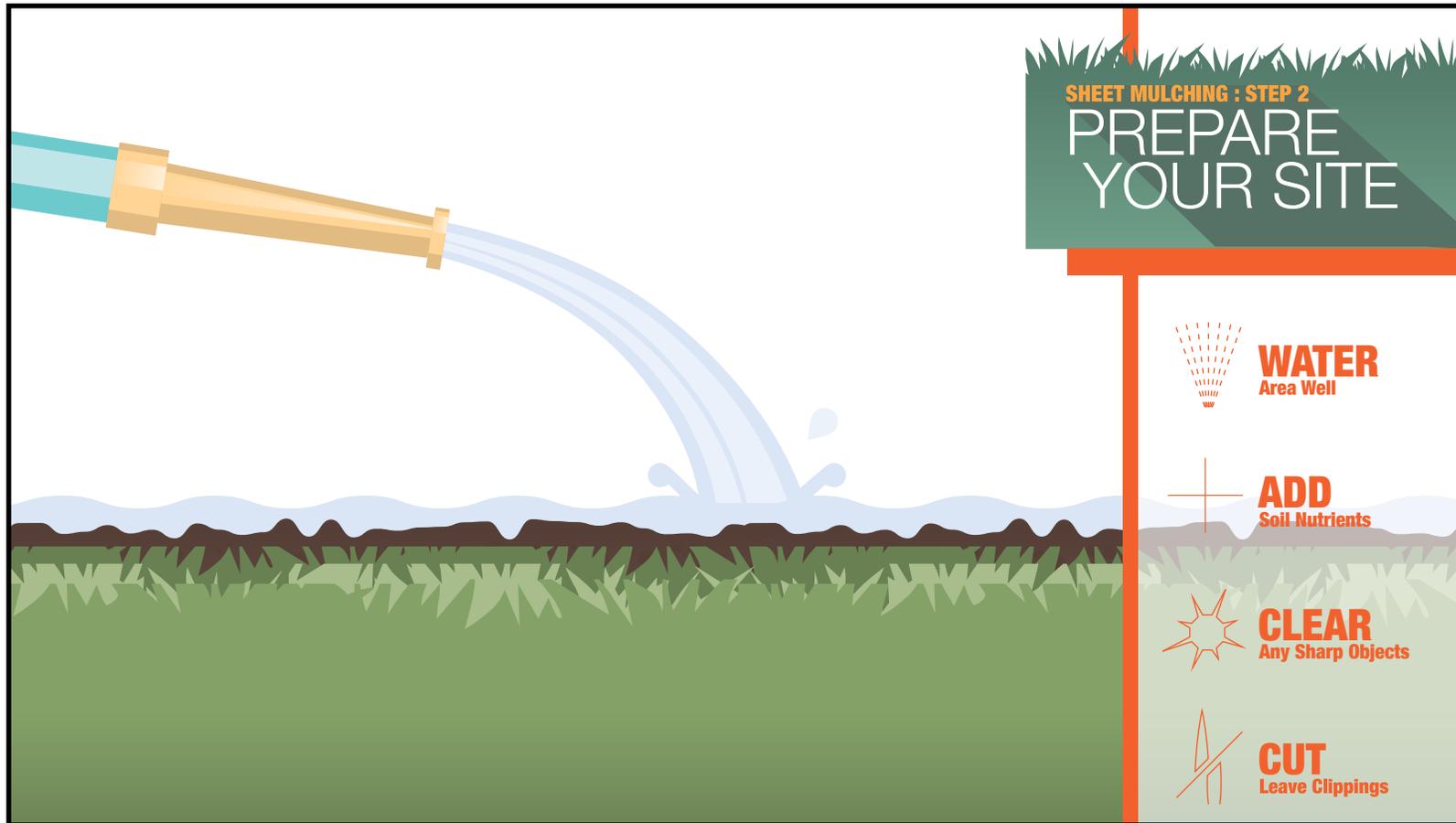
Remove only large woody plant material. The clippings and chopped vegetation left on the ground will decay and add nutrients to the soil.

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If a soil analysis indicates the need, add natural fertilizers and soil amendments at this point.

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Soak with water before you cover, to start the natural process of decomposition.

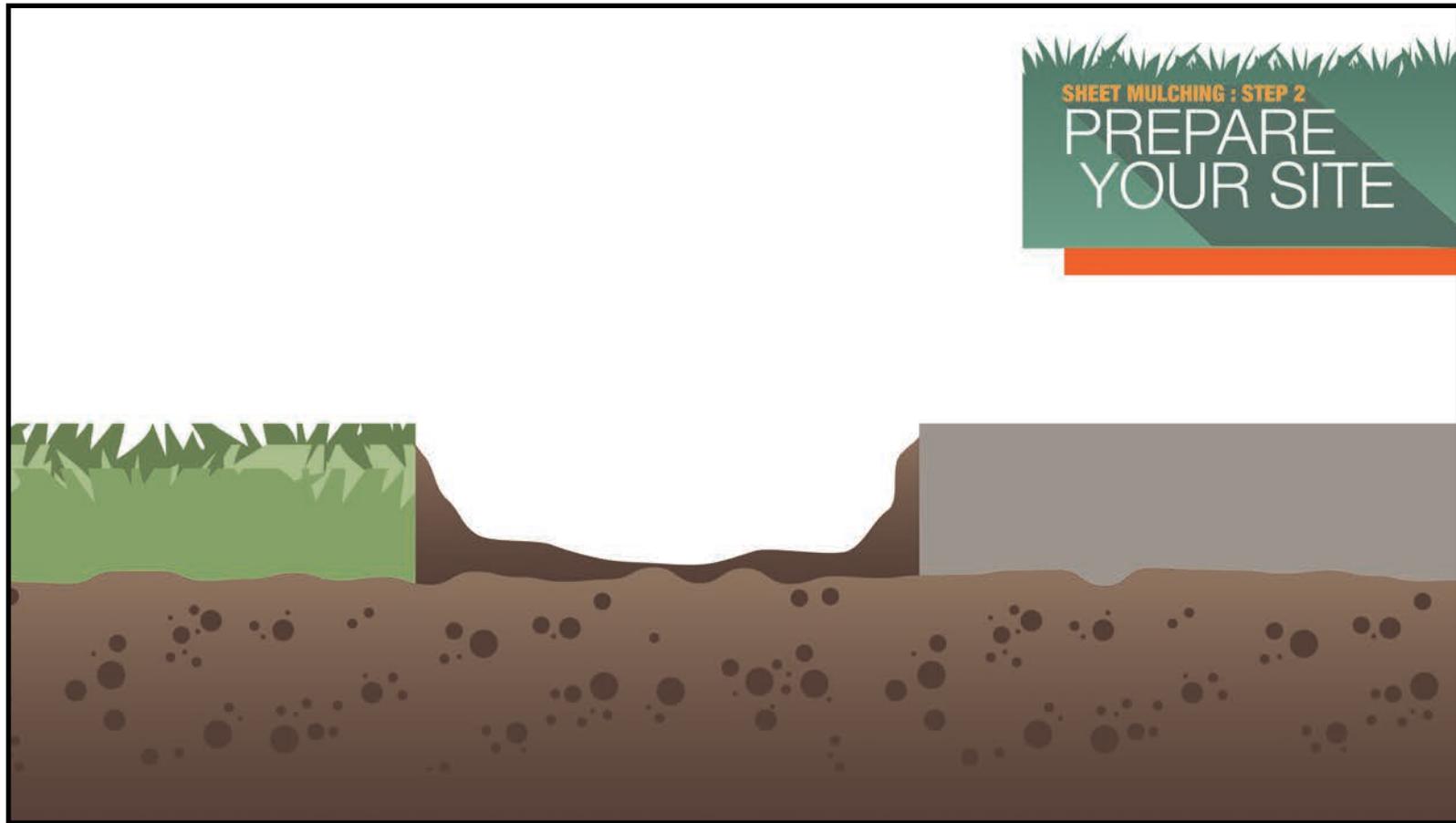
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If you are planting large plants such as five-gallon and larger plants, plant them now. Smaller plants will be planted later. Dig out the edges of the lawn three inches deep.

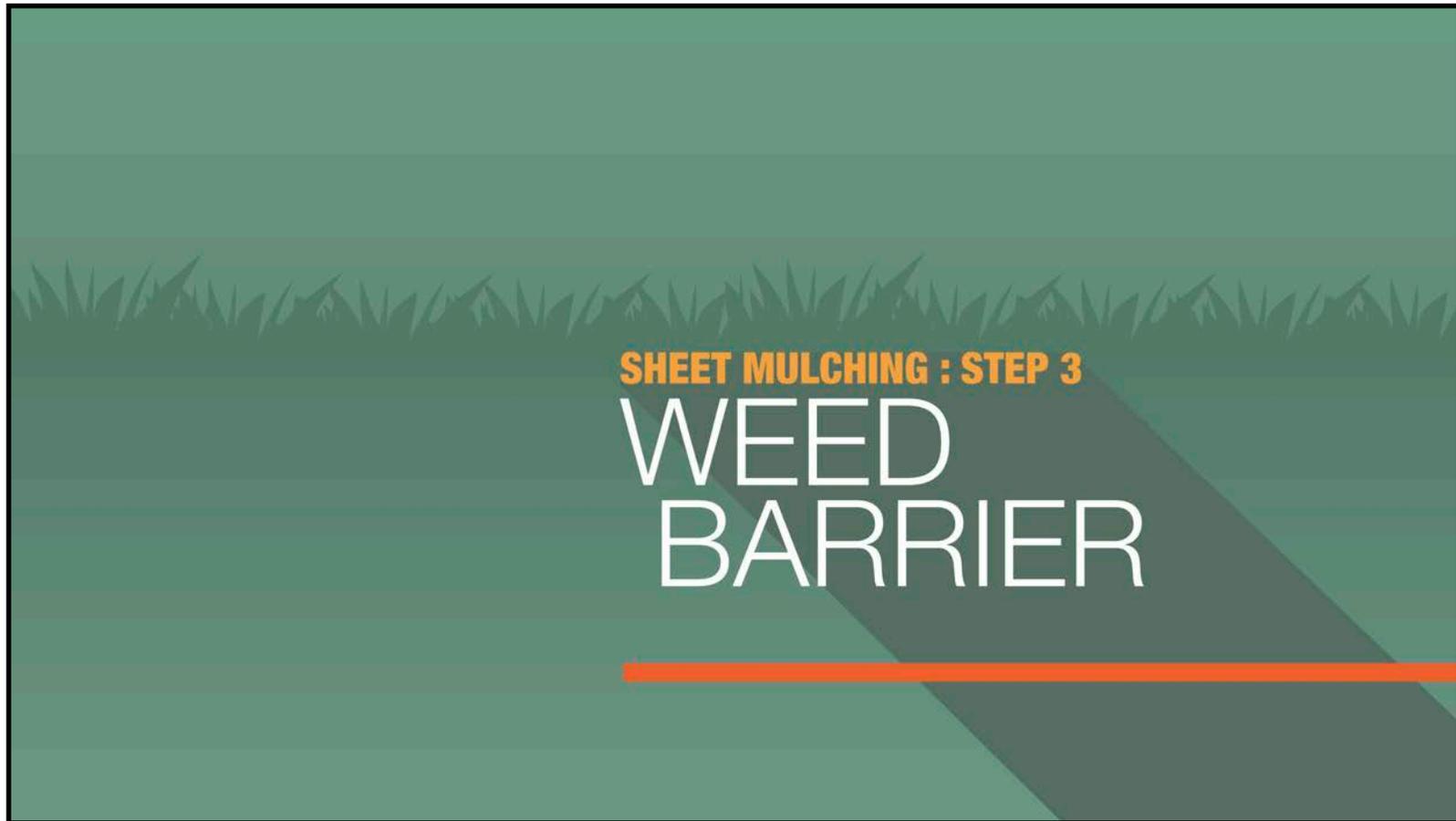
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Create a trench eight to twelve inches wide next to walkways, driveways and the lawn perimeter. This will prevent water run-off and erosion from the sheet mulched area by making the finished edge level with the existing grade. Removed soil can be piled on the lawn in mounds, or used elsewhere in your yard, so long that it does not contain invasive weeds.

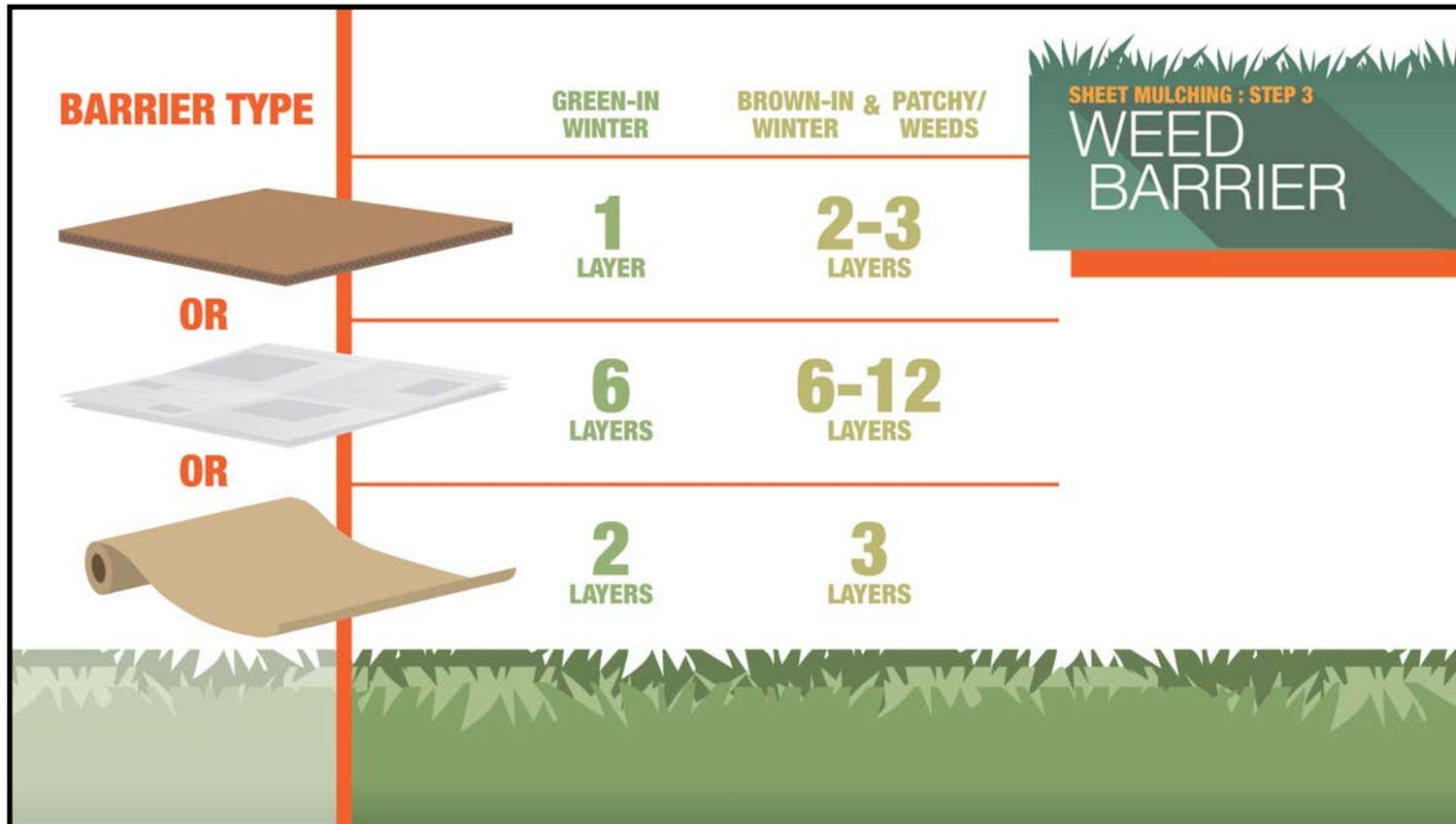
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Step three: Begin adding your biodegradable weed barrier.

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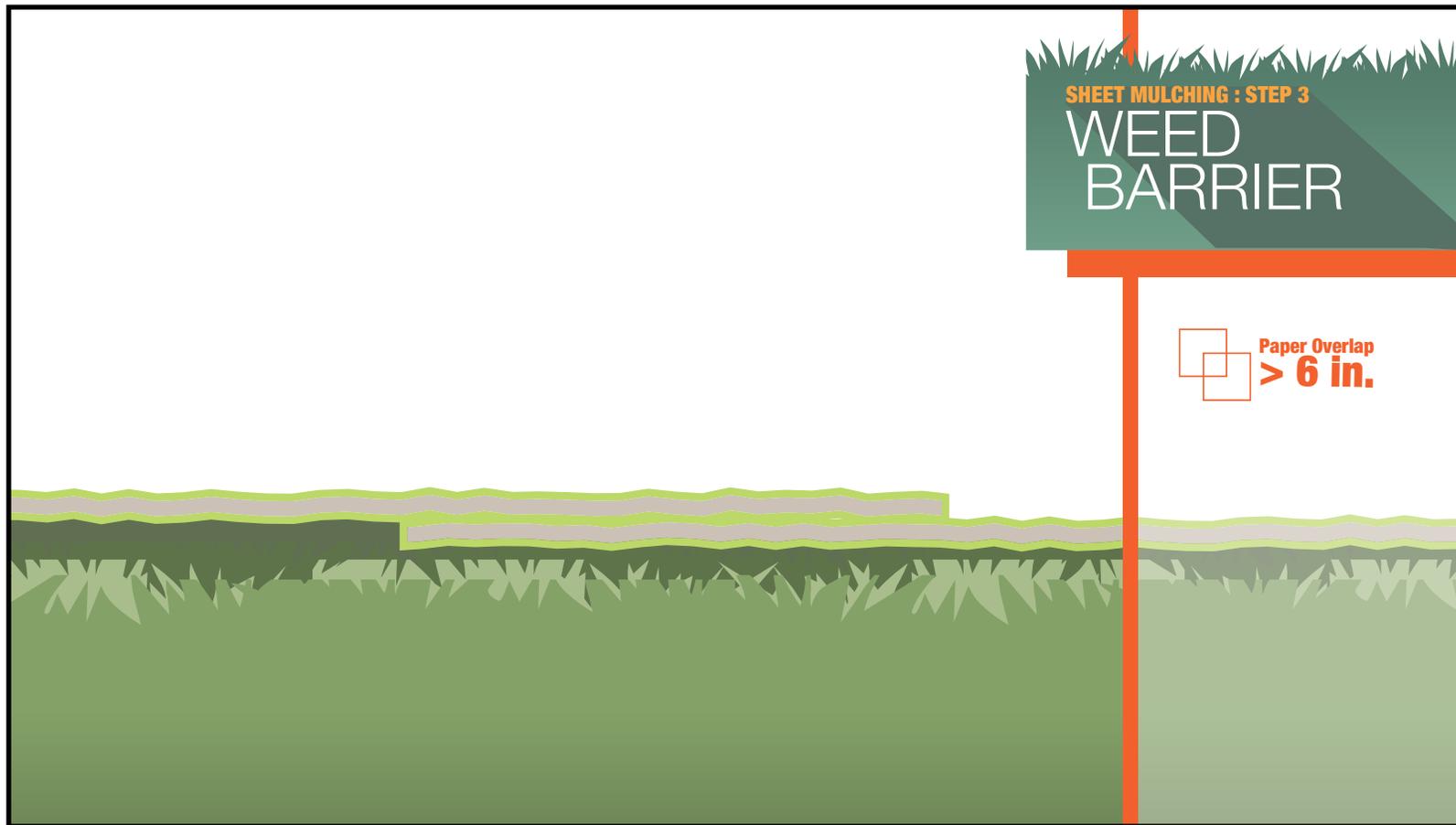
For green-in-winter lawns such as Fescue or Bluegrass, use one heavy layer of cardboard or six layers of newspaper. For brown-in winter lawns made up of Bermuda or St. Augustine grass, or patchy lawns, use 2-3 layers of heavy cardboard or six to twelve layers of newspaper. If you decide to use builder's paper, use two layers for green-in- winter lawns, and three layers for brown-in-winter and patchy lawns. Wet down the weed barrier as you go to keep it in place as you work.

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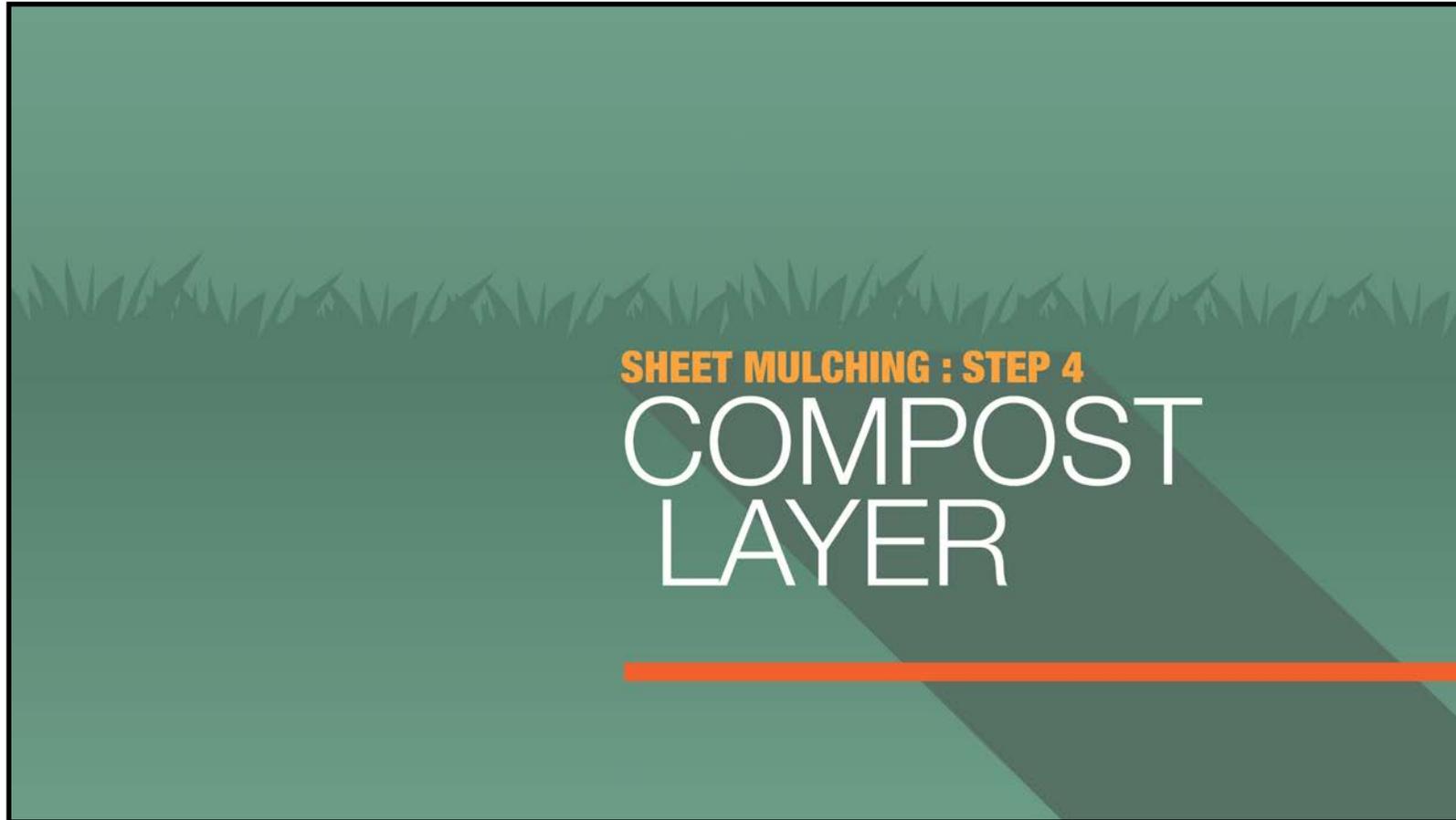
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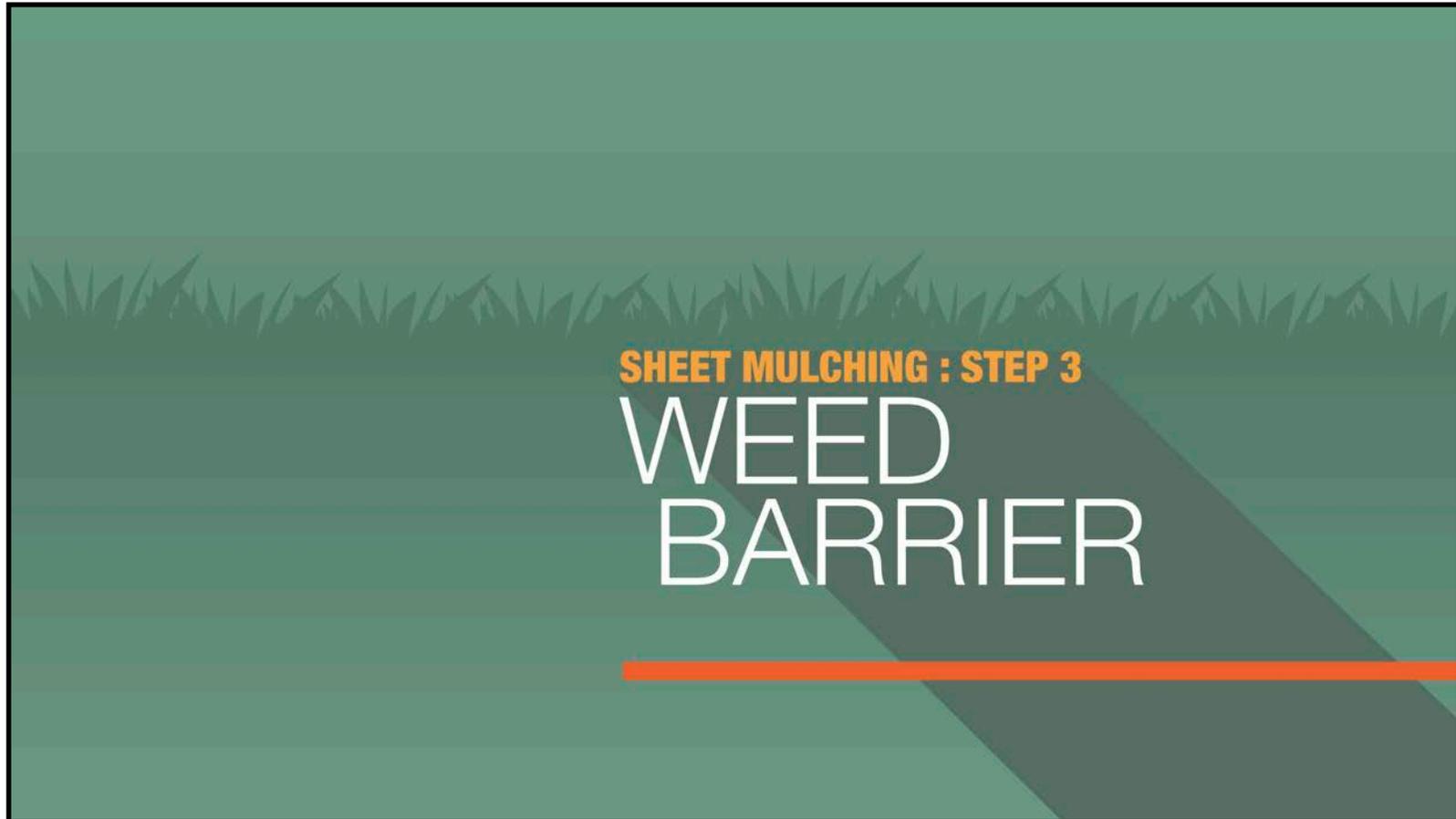
If a single piece of weed barrier does not cover the entire area, use several pieces. Be careful to include an overlap of six inches to prevent light penetration. If the pieces of weed barrier shift over time, the overlap will block the light from getting through. Any grass that can peek through the barrier will not be killed.

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Step four: Place compost or manure on top of the weed barrier.

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Step three: Begin adding your biodegradable weed barrier.

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For all three types of lawns, add five to six inches directly over the weed barrier.

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Step five: Add the mulch over the compost or manure.

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There are three types of mulch: Straw, grass clippings, or wood chips. If you use straw or grass clippings, green-in- winter lawns need six inches and brown-in- winter and patchy lawns need eight inches. If you use wood chips —green-in- winter lawns need three inches. Brown-in-winter lawns need four to six inches. Water the entire area.

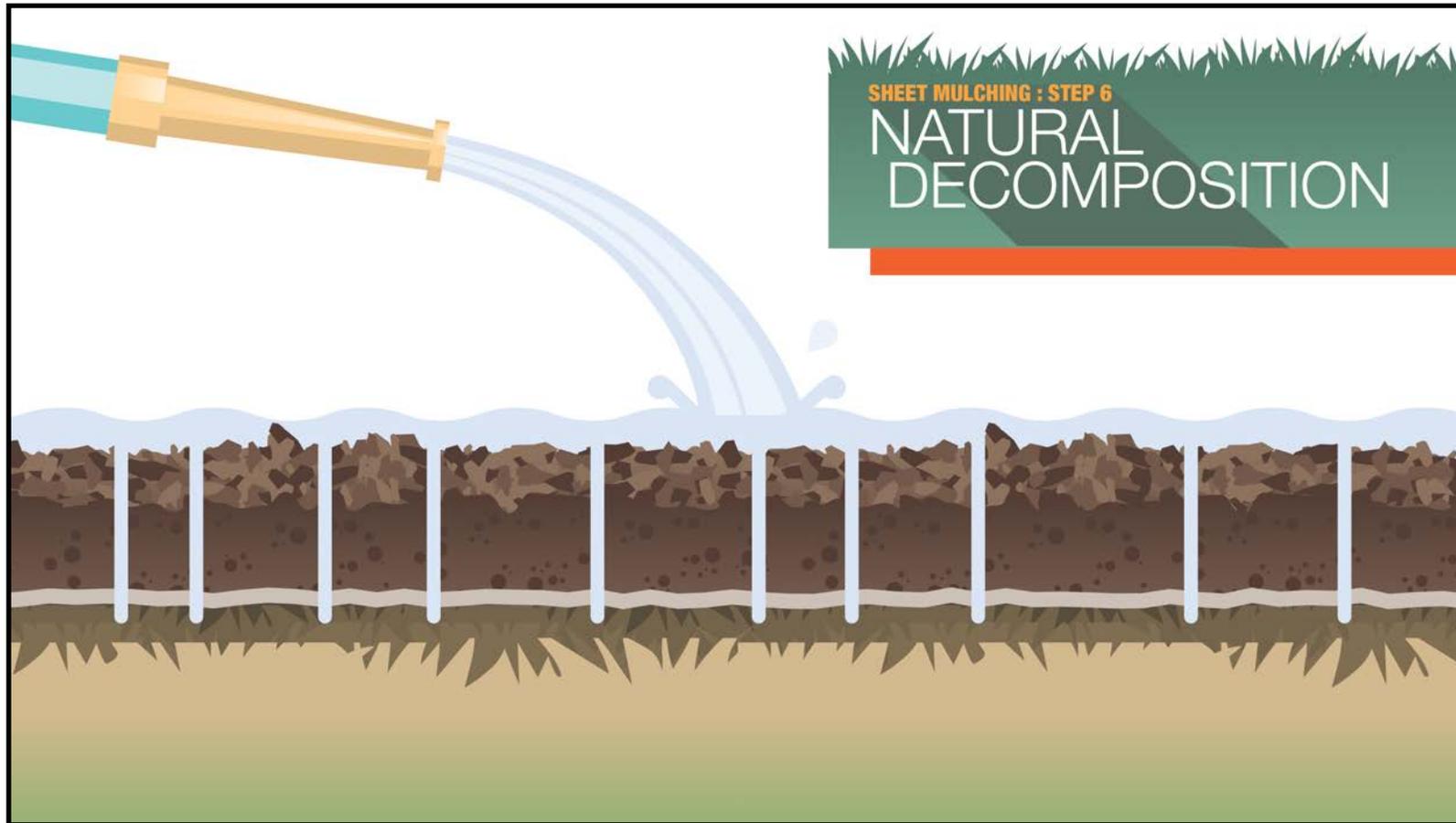
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Step six: Continue to water the lawn about once a week, until water reaches the soil.

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Watering will speed the decomposition of the lawn and the weed barrier. The mulch layer will control weeds and retain soil moisture.

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How long the lawn takes to decompose will vary depending on its type. For green-in-winter lawns it will take one to three months. For brown-in-winter and patchy lawns it will take at least three to eight months.

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Step seven: Once the lawn has decomposed, you can start to plant your new California Friendly or native landscape.

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When you are ready to plant, pull the mulch back. Cut through the cardboard and dig into the soil. Be on the lookout for any sign of Bermuda grass or other persistent weed sprouts for up to two years. It is easier to remove weeds when they are small.

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The best time to plant is the fall when soil is warm and days are cool. This weather encourages plant roots to grow quickly.