


Lawn Watering Tips

 **Water may be a life and death situation for landscape plants.**

General recommendations for lawns:

- ❑ **Water deeply and infrequently.** The goal is to moisten the entire root zone and then let it partially dry out. Avoid frequent shallow watering; that causes shallow rooting and makes your lawn more prone to drought stress. Overwatering can promote lawn disease, leach nutrients from the soil, and waste water.
- ❑ **Water slowly, or start and stop your sprinkler, so the water penetrates** rather than puddling or running off. Sandy soils will need lighter, more frequent watering because they can't hold as much water as clay soils.
- ❑ **Water when it's cool.** Watering in the middle of the day, especially when it's sunny, will lose half the water to evaporation. Watering in the morning is best; evening watering can promote diseases such as red thread or rust.
- ❑ **Don't water the sidewalk.** Choose an oscillating or rotating sprinkler that matches the shape of your lawn. And adjust it so you're not watering the driveway or sidewalk.
- ❑ **Aerate your lawn in the spring or fall.** Aeration will open up compacted soils and allow for more water and air movement. Call us for this service if you're not already on our natural lawn care program. We can overseed at the same time we aerate, helping to promote a thicker lawn.
- ❑ **Use a mulch mower** if possible. Proper mulch mowing will reduce water needs and supply

organic matter and nitrogen. Mow the lawn to 2-2 ½ inches in height. Longer grass blades will be stronger and will shade the soil surface, reducing the need for water.

- ❑ **Newly planted lawns may need daily watering** if planted in the late spring or summer. It will save watering effort if you replant a lawn in September.
- ❑ **Measure your sprinkler's output.** Lawns only need one inch of water a week, including rain.

How to tell if you've watered one inch

Unless you measure your sprinkler's output, you will not know how long it takes to generate one inch of water.

1. Position some cat food cans, tuna fish cans or even cereal bowls out in the yard.
2. Turn on your water for a set time, like 15 minutes.
3. After the time is up, turn off the water and use a ruler to measure the amounts in each container.
4. Add all of them together and take an average of the amounts.

For example, if your system put out an average of ¼ inch of water in 15 minutes, you would need to water for one hour to reach one inch of water.

Another helpful way to find out if your plants are getting enough water is to set up a rain gauge. Check the gauge after every rainfall (or weekly) to see if the one-inch mark has been reached. 