

WATERING ESTABLISHED LAWNS



Proper watering practices can improve the quality of your lawn, provide important environmental benefits and conserve water. It may be hard to believe, but most homeowners over-water their lawns!

The average lawn only needs about one inch (2.5 cm) of water per week, either by rainfall or in combination with irrigation. Of course, the water requirements vary between different grass varieties, but one inch per week is sufficient in most cases. Water requirements also vary with seasonal changes, sun, wind and shade factors, soil conditions and the degree of slope within a given area.

- The healthiest lawns are produced when they are watered thoroughly at infrequent intervals.
- The best times to water your lawn are early morning or early evening, when there is generally less wind and heat. Watering at these times allows for less evaporation into the air, greater penetration into the soil, and less run-off.
- One-inch (2.5 cm) of water per week will allow the water to reach deep into the root system.
- It will usually take 10-15 minutes to water your lawn thoroughly. If puddles or run-off occur, turn your sprinkler off for a few minutes to allow water to penetrate into the soil. If your watering system is applying water faster than it can be absorbed by the soil, you will want to adjust the amount of water applied, or the timing of the application, or both.
- Let the lawn completely dry out between watering intervals.
- Most turfgrass can tolerate dryer conditions over a reasonable period of time.



Grass in need of water will have a grey-blue cast to it. On an adequately watered lawn, footprints will completely disappear within minutes. On a lawn in need of water, footprints will still be visible after a half-hour or more suggesting the need for irrigation.

You also can use a soil probe, such as a screwdriver or large spike, to determine how dry your lawn is. If the probe can be pushed into the soil easily, the soil is probably still moist. But if it takes a lot of pressure to push in, the soil is likely too dry.

Avoid hand sprinkling because it cannot provide uniformity. Use a quality in-ground system, or hose end sprinkler.

With a little forethought you can maintain a healthy lawn and conserve water at the same time.



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