

TIP SHEET

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THE INTELLIGENT USE OF WATER™

Tips From Rain Bird that Will Keep Your Lawn, Garden and Wallet Full of Green

Did you ever think that you could be saving water by using an irrigation system? If your irrigation system is correctly designed, installed and maintained, it will help reduce the amount of water you use and still keep your lawn and landscape looking healthy. A few good sense tips from the leader in irrigation...

DON'T DROWN:

Avoid over-watering lawns and gardens. Much of the water is never absorbed anyway. Some water is lost to runoff by being applied too rapidly, and some water evaporates from exposed, un-mulched soil. But the greatest waste of water comes from applying too much, too often. Instead of watering for 20 minutes straight, water four times for 5 minutes each, with a 15-minute break between each session. This will allow water to soak in, while minimizing runoff.

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WATCH THE CLOCK:

Watering in the evening isn't a good idea because leaf surfaces can remain wet overnight --- an open invitation for fungal diseases. Midday watering is better for plants, but bad for your water bill because of water loss through evaporation. Try to water between 5 a.m. and 10 a.m., when the sun is low, winds are calm and temperatures are cool. Under these conditions, leaf surfaces have a chance to dry out during the day, reducing the chance of fungal diseases and conserving water due to reduced evaporation. Make sure to use low angle nozzles in areas where wind is a factor.

PLAY THE ZONE:

The goal of any irrigation system is to give plants a sufficient amount of water without wasting. Divide your yard and landscaping into separate irrigation zones so grass can be watered separately and more frequently than groundcovers, shrubs and trees. Both sprinkler and drip irrigation can be incorporated to achieve efficient use of water.

RAISE THE BLADE:

Trim grass at a higher mower setting to shade roots from sunlight and encourage deeper roots.

WATER ONLY THINGS THAT GROW:

If you have an underground sprinkler system, make sure the sprinkler heads are adjusted properly to avoid watering sidewalks and driveways. Also, a properly adjusted sprinkler head should spray large droplets of water instead of a fog of fine mist, which is more susceptible to evaporation and wind drift.

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CONSIDER DRIPPING:

When it comes to watering individual trees, flowerbeds, potted containers, or other non-grassy areas, consider direct application of water to roots using low volume “drip” emitters. By applying water slowly to soil, drip irrigation is by far the most efficient way to water. The water flows under low pressure through emitters, bubblers or spray heads placed at each plant. Water applied by drip irrigation has little chance of waste through evaporation or runoff, and will prevent unwanted weeds from growing.

GET YOUR HEADS CHECKED:

Since lawns and gardens should be watered in the early morning hours, a problem may not be discovered until it is too late. Once a month, turn on your irrigation system, throw on your bathing suit and make sure everything is working properly. A clogged head or a torn line can wreak havoc on your landscape and water bill.

YOU CAN NEVER HAVE TOO MULCH:

Mulch, a layer of non-living material covering the soil surface around plants, conserves water by significantly reducing moisture evaporation from the soil. Mulch also reduces weed populations, prevents soil compaction and keeps soil temperatures more moderate. Mulches can be organic materials such as pine bark, compost or woodchips; or inorganic materials, such as lava rock, limestone or permeable plastic, but not sheet plastic because soil needs to breathe.

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BE RAIN SMART:

Adjust your irrigation system as the seasons and weather change. Or better yet, install a shut-off device that automatically detects rain. They are inexpensive and enable you to take advantage of nature's precious gift without paying for it.

For more watering tips, or information on the product categories mentioned, visit www.rainbird.com, or contact your local Rain Bird retailer.

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