



# WATERING TIPS

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When the temperatures in Texas start to rise and there is no relief in sight from rainfall your lawn just like you and me need to hydrate so we don't wilt in the hot summer sun. If you follow these few simple steps you can ensure your lawn will stay healthy and green all summer long.

- **CHECK YOUR SYSTEM.** The first thing you want to do before the hot weather sets in is check to make sure your irrigation system is working properly. This is equally important if you have an automatic system or if you move a sprinkler around your yard by hand. If you have an automatic system you can run the stations manually for about two minutes for each station. This will give you enough time to see if the station is coming on as programmed. You need to check for broken sprinkler heads, clogged nozzles and any leaks in the piping. If you discover any issues with your system and if you feel comfortable making the repairs yourself this would be a good way spend an afternoon, or if not you can call any landscape or irrigation company to make the repairs. If you water your lawn manually make sure you check the sprinkler and any hoses you plan on using for leaks or broken parts and replace as needed.
- **CHECK YOUR COVERAGE.** To ensure that your irrigation system or sprinkler is providing the proper water coverage you can do a simple test to make sure.
  - Set out several small containers spread out evenly in your lawn.
  - Run all the stations that water your front lawn for ten minutes making sure you are catching water in all of the containers.
  - After all the stations have watered measure the amount of water collected in each container. The amount for each container should be about the same if not you might have a pressure issue or the sprinkler heads are not spaced properly or the nozzles are not the correct and need to be replaced with the correct size. You can look up your sprinkler online and it will list the type of nozzles to use depending on the distance between each sprinkler.
  - You can conduct the same test with a manual system by moving the sprinkler to a different location every fifteen minutes.
- **TIMING IS EVERYTHING.** Once your system is operating properly and you know your coverage is correct the next question is how long do I run each station, the time of day, and how do I know I'm getting the correct amount of water applied. The amount of time to run each station depends on several different factors, temperature, turf cover, and soil type. If you have the typical four inch pop up spray heads in your yard start with running each station for fifteen minutes turn off the station once the water starts to puddle and the water starts to run off along the sidewalk or in the street. Take note of the time and this is the amount of time you should run your sprinklers. If it is five minutes set that station to five minutes and repeat the process for each station until you have determined the correct watering time for each watering cycle. To get fifteen minutes of water applied set your controller for three different start times. If the first start time is at 3 AM the second can be set at 4 AM and the third can be set at 5 AM. This way you water just enough then you let the water soak in so you are not wasting water and all the water is going where it is intended to go, on the lawn, not down the drain. The best time to water is in the early morning for the typical homeowner with an average size yard but when you maintain over 60 acres of grass and plant material like we do at the ballpark you have to get creative with start times so that's why the cycle soak method works well even for large landscapes.

I hope these tips were helpful or they just reminded you of some of the basics watering techniques we all need to follow. Also follow the local guidelines for watering in your city or county and hopefully you can get the most out of your watering schedule and remember we all need to be good stewards of our resources "So Be Water Smart and Be Water Effective."

