

# BE WATER WISE AND SAVE \$\$\$

50% OR MORE OF OUR WATER CAN BE USED OUTDOORS, AND THE MAJORITY OF THIS IS USED TO WATER LAWNS.

WISE LAWN WATERING WILL CONSERVE A PRECIOUS RESOURCE AND WILL ALSO REDUCE YOUR MONTHLY WATER BILLS.

## WHEN SHOULD I WATER?

Watering in the early morning is the most effective time. Less water evaporates and fewer disease problems will occur.

## HOW OFTEN SHOULD I WATER?

Watering too much = More mowing!!!

Water lawns *once every three or four days*. Even during the hot summer months, lawns do not need to be watered every day. Third-day watering promotes deeper root growth which makes your lawn more water efficient.

Look for signs of stress: Does the grass stay flat after you step on it? Are the blades curling? If so, then it is time to water.

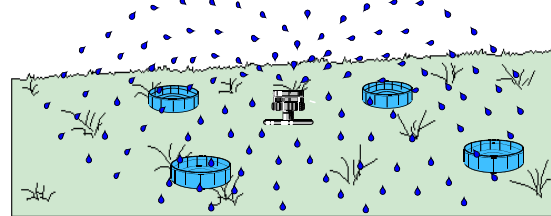
## HOW LONG SHOULD I WATER?

How long you should water depends upon two factors:

1. How quickly your sprinklers put water on your lawn (Sprinkler Output).
2. The amount of water your grass needs to stay healthy. (Suggested Watering Schedule).

## SPRINKLER OUTPUT TEST

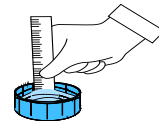
1. PLACE 4-6 TUNA FISH CANS AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS ON YOUR LAWN.



2. RUN THE SPRINKLER FOR 15 MINUTES.



3. MEASURE THE DEPTH OF WATER IN EACH CAN WITH A RULER.



4. FIGURE THE AVERAGE DEPTH.

|                |                                 |
|----------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Example</b> | <i>can 1 = 1/8 inch</i>         |
|                | <i>can 2 = 1/4 inch</i>         |
|                | <i>can 3 = 5/16 inch</i>        |
|                | <i>can 4 = 1/4 inch</i>         |
|                | <i>total 15/16 inches ÷ 4 =</i> |
|                | <i>Approximately 1/4 inch</i>   |

## WATERING TIME

- 1) Determine your **sprinkler output** using the test.
- 2) Use the **Suggested Watering Schedule**.

For example, if your sprinkler output is ¼ inch (in 15 minutes) and it is April, water for 22 minutes for warm season grass, 36 minutes for cool season grass and 22 minutes for overseeded grass. Water again in 3-4 days.

*NOTE: A properly adjusted underground sprinkler system is better than hand placed sprinklers. Underground systems deliver water more evenly and at a finer spray that can be absorbed by the turf.*

*Install a sprinkler control clock or faucet timer.*

### Suggested Watering Schedule for Overseeded Grasses

| Overseeded - Uses 29 gallons/ft <sup>2</sup> /year        |   |     |     |     |     |     |
|---|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Month   | If Your Sprinkler Output in 15 minutes, in Inches is: |     |     |     |     |     |
|   | 1/8   | 1/4 | 3/8 | 1/2 | 5/8 | 3/4 |
| Irrigate for the Number of Minutes Indicated Every 3 Days |   |     |     |     |     |     |
| Jan   | 14  | 7   | 5   | 3   | 3   | 2   |
| Feb   | 23  | 12  | 8   | 6   | 5   | 4   |
| March   | 50  | 25  | 17  | 13  | 10  | 8   |
| April   | 44  | 22  | 15  | 11  | 9   | 7   |
| May   | 73  | 37  | 24  | 18  | 15  | 12  |
| June  | 85  | 43  | 28  | 21  | 17  | 14  |
| July  | 51  | 26  | 17  | 13  | 10  | 9   |
| Aug   | 39  | 19  | 13  | 10  | 8   | 6   |
| Sept  | 51  | 25  | 17  | 13  | 10  | 8   |
| Oct   | 23  | 12  | 8   | 6   | 5   | 4   |
| Nov   | 35  | 17  | 12  | 9   | 7   | 6   |
| Dec   | 13  | 7   | 4   | 3   | 3   | 2   |

### Suggested Watering Schedules for Cool and Warm Season Grasses

| Cool Season - Uses 30.75 gallons/ft <sup>2</sup> /year    |   |     |     |     |     |     |
|---|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Month   | If Your Sprinkler Output in 15 minutes, in Inches is: |     |     |     |     |     |
|   | 1/8   | 1/4 | 3/8 | 1/2 | 5/8 | 3/4 |
| Irrigate for the Number of Minutes Indicated Every 3 Days |   |     |     |     |     |     |
| Jan   | No Supplemental Irrigation Needed                     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Feb   |   |     |     |     |     |     |
| March   | 50  | 25  | 17  | 13  | 10  | 8   |
| April   | 72  | 36  | 24  | 18  | 14  | 12  |
| May   | 91  | 45  | 30  | 23  | 18  | 15  |
| June  | 106   | 53  | 35  | 26  | 21  | 18  |
| July  | 68  | 34  | 23  | 17  | 14  | 11  |
| Aug   | 54  | 27  | 18  | 14  | 11  | 9   |
| Sept  | 65  | 32  | 22  | 16  | 13  | 11  |
| Oct   | 42  | 21  | 14  | 11  | 8   | 7   |
| Nov   | 35  | 17  | 12  | 9   | 7   | 6   |
| Dec   | No Supplemental Irrigation Needed                     |     |     |     |     |     |

| Warm Season- Uses 19.50 gallons/ft <sup>2</sup> /yr       |   |     |     |     |     |     |
|---|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Month   | If Your Sprinkler Output in 15 minutes, in Inches is: |     |     |     |     |     |
|   | 1/8   | 1/4 | 3/8 | 1/2 | 5/8 | 3/4 |
| Irrigate for the Number of Minutes Indicated Every 3 Days |   |     |     |     |     |     |
| Jan   | No Supplemental Irrigation Needed                     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Feb   |   |     |     |     |     |     |
| March   |   |     |     |     |     |     |
| April   | 44  | 22  | 15  | 11  | 9   | 7   |
| May   | 73  | 37  | 24  | 18  | 15  | 12  |
| June  | 85  | 43  | 28  | 21  | 17  | 14  |
| July  | 51  | 26  | 17  | 13  | 10  | 9   |
| Aug   | 39  | 19  | 13  | 10  | 8   | 6   |
| Sept  | 51  | 25  | 17  | 13  | 10  | 8   |
| Oct   | 23  | 12  | 8   | 6   | 5   | 4   |
| Nov   | No Supplemental Irrigation Needed                     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Dec   |   |     |     |     |     |     |

If water run-off occurs during watering, water using a "cycle-soak" method. Run the system until run-off begins. Stop and let the water soak in. Run the system again to complete the recommended watering time.

## Tips for Improving Watering Efficiency:

- Dethatch, aerate and top dress your turf once a year to help water penetrate.
- If your lawn begins to show water stress 2 or 3 days after applying the prescribed amounts of water, you may have sandy soil. Water more often but at a reduced amount per application. A general rule for sandy soils is to water every other day but for only one-half (½) the amount of time per application indicated using the Water Schedule in this brochure.
- In the Sprinkler Output test, catch cans which vary by 20% more or 20% less water than the average usually indicate sprinkler performance problems resulting in uneven coverage. Find the cause. If you can't easily correct it, manually water the dry spots rather than increase your average application rate. Use the same brand of sprinkler heads.
- Efficient turf watering means wetting the soil just below the root zone (8-12") and then allowing the soil to dry. To determine the depth of watering, gently push a metal rod or screwdriver into the ground. It will stop when it has reached dry soil. Water again when the probe won't penetrate the soil more than 4 inches.

- Raise your mower height to 1½ to 2½" for Bermuda grass, 2½ to 3" for fescue and bluegrass and 3 ½" for buffalo grass. This will reduce water loss through evaporation. Cut grass when it is higher than the above recommended height. Never remove more than 40% of the grass height at any one time.
- During the drier summer months, use less fertilizer. Your plants will still prosper, but their water needs will be reduced.
- Adjust sprinklers so that they water plants, not walls, driveways or sidewalks.

### GRASS TYPES

**There are two types of turf grasses: warm season and cool season.**

**Cool:** These grasses grow best during the cooler parts of spring and fall. They may or may not go dormant during the winter cold. Generally cool season grasses are bunch grasses, meaning that they do not spread by runners. They include perennial ryegrass, annual ryegrass and tall fescue.

**Warm:** Warm season grasses actively grow from late-April (when the soil temperature warms above 65°F) to mid- October, and go dormant in the winter. Spreading warm season grasses include bermuda grass and buffalo grass. Bunch warm season grasses include a Cochise County native- blue grama.

Cochise County Lawn Care Guidelines are available through *Water Wise*. The guidelines include information on grass identification, establishment and maintenance.

A **free On -Site Consultation** on water efficient landscapes is also available by calling *Water Wise*.

**Sierra Vista: 458-8278, Ext. 2141**  
**Willcox: 384-3594**

**or visit our website:**  
**[waterwise.arizona.edu](http://waterwise.arizona.edu)**

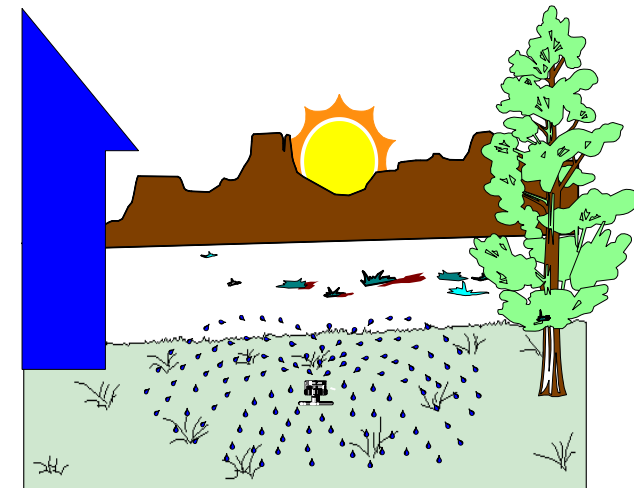
*Water Wise* is a  
University of Arizona Cooperative  
Extension water conservation program  
whose Partners are:  
Cochise County  
City of Sierra Vista  
Fort Huachuca  
Upper San Pedro Partnership  
Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative  
City of Bisbee

Additional support is provided by  
Pueblo del Sol Water Company.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Kirk Astroth, Interim Director, Cooperative Extension, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences, The University of Arizona.

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# Lawn Watering Guide for Cochise County



University of Arizona Cooperative  
Extension *Water Wise* Program

09/08/11