



Lawn Guide

Proper lawn watering is key to drastically reducing outdoor water use! Summer landscape irrigation more than doubles water consumption. Within the region, outdoor water use accounts for 41% of the annual residential water usage, and research shows that on average 80-90% of outdoor residential water usage is for lawn watering.

How much should I water?

Lawns in the Pacific Northwest generally require about an inch of water a week, *including rain*, in temperatures below 85 degrees. Temperatures above 85 generally require 1 ½ inches of water a week. To ensure that your lawn is getting appropriate amount of water each week use a lawn watering gauge or tuna can to measure water applied. Here's how:

- ◆ Place the lawn watering gauge in an area of the lawn where it receives a typical amount of water
- ◆ Move the gauge around the lawn area between each watering cycle to help identify dry spots
- ◆ Avoid placing the gauge under trees, shrubs, or other plantings
- ◆ Run the sprinklers until the gauge is filled to the watering recommendation
- ◆ Be sure to empty your gauge after each application

Generally speaking, soils in the Veneta area absorb and release water slowly, therefore it is recommended to allow at least one day between watering days to allow air into the soil. For proper lawn watering, the 1-1 ½" weekly recommendation should be broken down and administered in equal watering intervals of two or three times over the course of the week, rather than fulfilling the recommendation in one application.*

Example: if you water your lawn 1" during the week, you should water a half inch two days a week, or 1/3 of an inch three days a week.

Without a sufficient amount of air in the soil, water applied to the lawn will runoff carrying with it fertilizers and pesticides that ultimately may end up making its way to the storm system rather than keeping them in your yard. Also, watering in equal intervals 2-3 times a week allows for deep root growth which leads to a healthier lawn that is less vulnerable to drought.

When should I water?

- ◆ The best time of day to water is early in the morning when evaporation rates are lowest. It is recommended that lawns be watered anytime from 5-8 AM. After 9 AM, evaporation begins to rob the soil of moisture. Also, water droplets combined with the hot sun create a magnifying effect that can actually burn your grass and plants.
- ◆ Watering your lawn at night can lead to root rot and creates excessive moisture that can cause certain lawn diseases.
- ◆ Water only when your grass or plants show signs of needing water. If you step on grass and it springs back up, you can wait to water. If it stays flat, it's time to water.

Other lawn care tips:

- ◆ When mowing the lawn, leave the grass at least 3" long to provide shade for the roots.
- ◆ Sharpen mower blades at least twice during the summer. Dull blades tear grass, forcing it to use 40-60% more water!
- ◆ Avoid over-fertilizing your lawn. Applying fertilizer increases the need for water.
- ◆ Don't water your lawn on windy days. You will lose water to evaporation *and* you will end up watering the sidewalks and driveways!

* The watering recommendation is for a lawn in full sun. A shaded lawn only needs about 60% of the recommendation. Shrubs and perennials use approximately 50%.

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