

REDUCING THE NEED FOR WATERING

Let grass grow taller

- To promote deep rooting and lawns that tolerate dry conditions, mow grass no shorter than two inches.
- Taller grass shades the soil surface, thus reducing evaporation and sprouting of weed seeds.

Use chemicals wisely

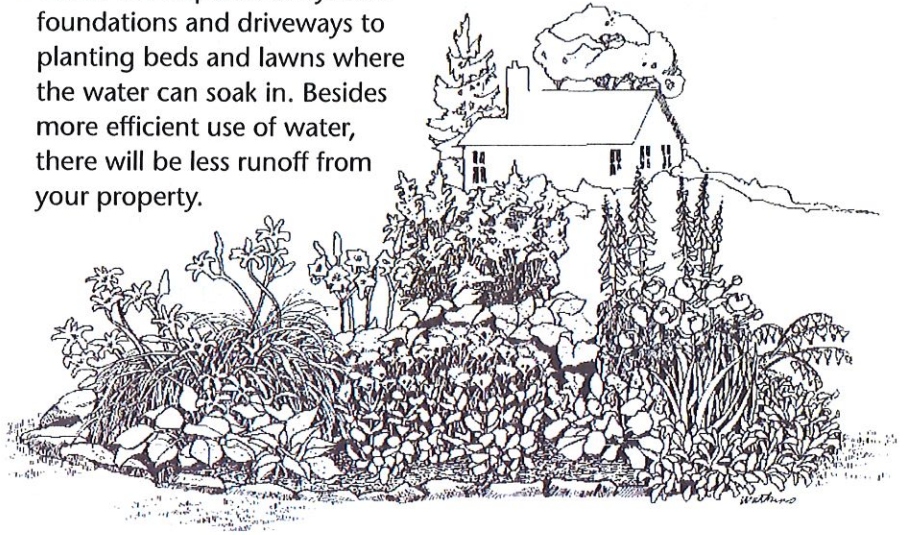
- Proper fertilizing promotes deep roots and drought tolerance. Improper fertilizing can have the opposite effect.
- Don't fertilize a dry lawn – high concentrations of nutrients tend to draw moisture out of grass.
- Control weeds to reduce competition for soil moisture. This may be done by hand, or with careful use of broad-leaf herbicides.

Consider the weather

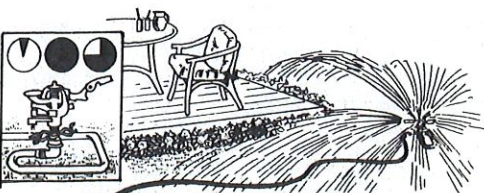
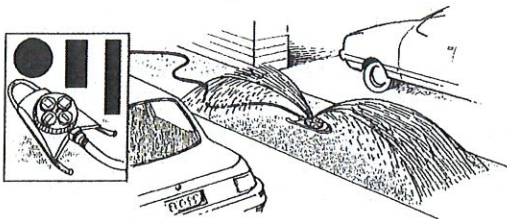
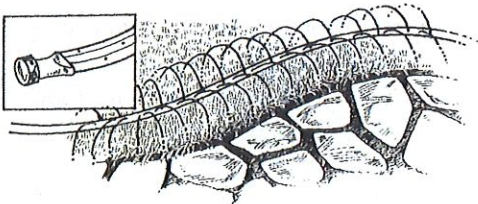
- Don't mow during the heat of day, especially when conditions are hot and dry; newly cut grass blades lose water quickly.
- Don't water if a one-inch rainstorm has occurred in the last week. Also, postpone watering if the forecast calls for rain in the next few days.

Be creative

- Plan and establish a landscape that has less lawn and requires less water and maintenance. Consider plant groupings that include drought-tolerant species and organic mulches that help keep the soil moist.
- Direct downspouts away from foundations and driveways to planting beds and lawns where the water can soak in. Besides more efficient use of water, there will be less runoff from your property.



- Learn to live with temporary brown-outs. A few weeks of dormancy will not hurt the roots of a healthy lawn.



Tips on sprinklers and efficient watering

Hardly anyone has a perfectly rectangular or circular lawn. Fortunately, there are many sprinkler types to deal with odd angles. (A few are shown here.) Over time, savings on your water bill will pay for the investment on several types. Other tips for efficient watering include:

- ✓ Consider a timed sprinkler, which automatically shuts off after a desired rate of application.
- ✓ Use a sprinkling can or hand-held hose to specifically target small areas where use of a sprinkler is wasteful.
- ✓ Aerate your lawn to improve water penetration and reduce runoff.
- ✓ Avoid using a conventional sprinkler on the strip of lawn between the sidewalk and street. Runoff from this area travels quickly and directly to the gutters and storm sewer. A soaker hose might be the best option.
- ✓ Don't forget to turn the sprinkler off! Forgetfulness can result in a trail of water flowing from your property.