



Water conservation & gardening

Additional information

Lawn care can use up a lot of water. Below are tips provided by the City of Spokane on how to use water for your lawn and garden, including sprinkler use. In Spokane, residential consumers currently use the most water. Our region is categorized as "high desert," which is why many people use so much water to keep the grass green.

QUICK TIPS

(Source: <https://my.spokanecity.org/publicworks/water/water-wise-spokane/outdoor-conservation/>)

Timing is everything

- Water your lawn or garden during the cool early morning hours, as opposed to midday, to reduce evaporation.
- Use an automatic timer on your sprinkler or set a kitchen timer to remind you to turn off the water. When left unattended, a garden hose can waste as much as 600 gallons of water in just one hour!

Let it grow

- Raise your lawn mower blade to at least 3 inches. Taller grass promotes deeper roots, shades the root system, and holds soil moisture better than a closely cropped lawn.
- Don't over fertilize. You will increase the lawn's need for water.

Tune up your system

- Inspect irrigation systems and fix leaks and broken or clogged sprinkler heads. A broken sprinkler can waste 25,000 gallons in 6 months!
- Make sure you're watering the yard and not the street or driveway.

Water when needed

- Lawns only need watering every 3 to 5 days in the summer. Watering more than 1 inch per week means you're just watering the ground below.
- Look for sprinklers that produce droplets or use a soaker hose to water trees and shrubs.

SPRINKLERS

How much is enough?

One of the easiest ways to save water is to make sure that you are not overwatering your lawn and plants. Most of us water more than needed, which not only wastes water but also drowns our plants.

- According to numerous studies, a healthy lawn needs only about 1 inch of rain per week. When using a sprinkler system or hose, that's the equivalent of 60 gallons per 100 square feet.



Need help finding a resource?

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- Watering a garden is a little more complicated because the amount of moisture needed by vegetables, fruits, and flowers varies, and these plants are more sensitive to heat. The “one-inch-per-week” guideline generally applies with a few modifications.
- When the weather is hot, it is recommended that a half inch of water is added per week for every 10 degrees that the average daily temperature exceeds 60 degrees. Always water your lawn or garden during the cool morning hours, as opposed to midday, to reduce evaporation.
- Soil type is also a factor when determining the amount of water your lawn and garden need. Since sandy soils drain faster, they require more water than other soil types. In most cases, a deep watering twice per week is sufficient once the plants are established. If the soil is moist at a depth of 6 inches, this is ideal.
- A rain sensor for an automatic irrigation system will allow your system to automatically shut-off if rainfall exceeds a certain amount. Afterward, the system will automatically resume its normal schedule.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Drought Tolerant Plants - WSU Extension \(PDF\)](#)
- [EPA - Residential Water Efficiency \(PDF\)](#)
- [Irrigation Controllers \(PDF\)](#)
- [Smart Watering \(PDF\)](#)
- [Using Water Wisely \(PDF\)](#)
- [Spokane SmartScape](#)
- [EPA: Use Your Water Sense](#)
- [Ecology: Water Conservation](#)
- [Spokane Aquifer Joint Board Conservation](#)
- [HomeAdvisor Water Conservation Throughout the Home](#)

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