



LAWN WATERING TIPS

The best time to water your lawn is when it shows signs of stress from lack of water. Use the following techniques to identify signs or indications of water need:

- **Color Test:** When water becomes unavailable for an extended period, a lawn will exhibit a bluish-gray cast.
- **Footprinting:** Walk across your lawn late in the day and examine the lawn behind you to see if your steps left any "footprints". Your footprints will appear in a lawn when the grass has low levels of water in its tissues. If your footprints remain for an extended period of time, the lawn should be watered to prevent the grass from becoming dormant.
- **Leaf Check:** During dry periods, grass leaves respond by wilting, rolling or folding. These symptoms signal that watering is necessary to prevent the turfgrass from turning brown and becoming dormant.
- **Screwdriver Test:** Press a screwdriver into the lawn. If the soil is very dry it will be difficult to push the screwdriver into the ground. Use the screwdriver test with other visual methods to help judge when you should water the lawn.

If a lawn exhibits symptoms of drought stress, apply about half an inch of water on coarse, sandy soil and 1 inch of water on heavy or fine-textured soil. These amounts will moisten the soil to a depth of 4 to 6 inches.

Water early in the morning; it is the most efficient and beneficial time. Water evaporation is minimized so that a high proportion of the applied water is used by the grass.

REMEMBER: Once you water do **not** water again until you observe water deficiency symptoms. **Never** water the grass every day except during the establishment of newly seeded, sodded or sprigged lawns. Watering everyday with a small amount will encourage a shallow root system, making the grass less drought tolerant.

These tips are brought to you by Clemson Extension & the Lexington Countywide Stormwater Consortium.

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9 PRINCIPLES OF ENVIRONMENTALLY-FRIENDLY LANDSCAPING

Right Plant, Right Place

Select plants for your yard that will require minimal amounts of water, fertilizer and pesticides, based on conditions in your yard. This will result in a sustainable landscape which will save you time, energy and money.

Water Efficiently

Irrigate only when your lawn and landscape need water. Proper watering is the key to a healthy yard and reducing runoff.

Mulch

Maintaining a 2-3" layer of mulch will help retain soil moisture, prevent erosion, and suppress weeds...remember to keep mulch 1-2 in. away from stems and trunks of plants to prevent stem rot.

Recycle

Recycle grass clippings, leaves, and yard trimmings on site to provide added nutrients to the soil and to reduce waste disposal.

Fertilize Appropriately

Less is often best. Over-utilization of fertilizers can be hazardous to your yard and the environment while contributing to a poor quality lawn.

Control Yard Pests Responsibly

Unwise use of pesticides can harm people, pets, beneficial organisms, and the environment. Always identify the pest and use the most environmentally-friendly method of control.

Reduce Stormwater Runoff

Water running off from your yard can carry soil, debris, fertilizer and pesticides that can harm water quality. Reduction of this runoff will help prevent non-point source pollution.

Attract Wildlife

Plants in your yard that provide food, water and shelter can conserve South Carolina's diverse wildlife.

Protect the Waterfront

Waterfront property, whether on a lake, river, stream or pond, is very fragile and should be protected as a natural treasure. Natural buffer strips should be planted along the edge of property bordering any waterway to absorb runoff containing excess fertilizers and pesticides.

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