

## Does your lawn have a Drinking Problem?

Over watering your lawn can encourage shallow root systems, dollar weed growth, chinch bug damage, and excessive thatch (particularly in St. Augustine).

### WATER ONLY WHEN NEEDED

To develop deep, healthy root systems, plants should be watered only when the first signs of wilt occur. As the soil begins to dry out, the lawn will show a lack of moisture by lengthwise folding or rolling of blades. When the lawn shows signs of wilt, it is time to irrigate.

Over watering doesn't allow plants to absorb irrigation water or use water efficiently. In some instances water is applied too rapidly and lost through run-off. In other cases, like daytime watering, water is lost through evaporation.

### Always Follow Your Local Watering Schedule

To find out the current watering schedule for Pinellas County Utilities, call 727-464-4000 or visit [www.pinellascounty.org/utilities](http://www.pinellascounty.org/utilities).

**Water, whether potable (drinking), well, surface or reclaimed, is a precious resource.**

# OUTDOOR WATER SAVER'S GUIDE

How to water	When to water	Not in the rain	Not in wind or heat	Listen to your lawn	Xeriscape
 <p>Water your landscape infrequently but deeply. This encourages deeper root growth and a healthier lawn.</p>	 <p>Water once a week in the cooler months and twice a week in hot and dry periods. Water before 8 a.m. or after 6 p.m.</p>	 <p>Don't irrigate in the rain or if rain has occurred in the last few days.</p>	 <p>Avoid watering when it is windy or cold.</p>	 <p>Water when your lawn and landscape show signs of wilt or discoloration.</p>	 <p>Xeriscape with native and drought tolerant plants. These require minimal irrigation and maintenance.</p>
Mulch, mulch, mulch	Mow lawns higher	Repair leaks	Rain shut-off devices	Follow water rules	Use timed sprinklers
 <p>A good mulch conserves soil moisture, moderates soil temperature, and reduces soil compaction. Apply 2-4 inches.</p>	 <p>Mow to a height of 3 inches in summer. Long grass blades improve heat tolerance, and reduce weeds.</p>	 <p>Check and repair leaking sprinkler heads. Adjust to adequately cover your landscape.</p>	 <p>Install a rain shut-off device. These units will automatically shut-off your irrigation system after a rain event.</p>	 <p>Follow the odd-even address irrigation rules for potable water.</p>	 <p>Install timed sprinklers. Hoses without automatic shut-off use 200 gallons per hour.</p>

*Be A Good Neighbor - Be a Water Saver!*



For further information on more efficient water use both in the home and in the landscape, contact:

**Pinellas County Utilities**

14 S. Fort Harrison Ave. • Clearwater, FL 33756 • (727) 464-4000  
or visit our web site [www.pinellascounty.org/utilities](http://www.pinellascounty.org/utilities)

# WATERING YOUR FLORIDA LAWN

## CALIBRATE YOUR SPRINKLER SYSTEM

- Use 5 or 10 cans (such as coffee or tuna cans) all the same size.
- For an in-ground sprinkler system, place containers randomly throughout one sprinkler zone. Repeat for each zone.
- For a hose-end sprinkler, place containers evenly in a straight line from the sprinkler to the edge of the watering pattern.
- Turn the water on and let it fill the cans for 15 minutes.
- Pour all the water into one can, measure to the nearest 1/18<sup>th</sup> of an inch (0.3 centimeters) and divide by the number of cans.
- This shows how much water is being applied in 15 minutes.
- To determine the irrigation rate in inches (centimeters) per hour, multiply the average depth of water by four.

Table 1. Time required to apply water for a given irrigation rate

Amount of Water to be Applied	Irrigation Rate (Amount of Water per Hour)			
	.05 in. (1.3 cm)	1.0 in. (2.5 cm)	1.5 in. (3.8 cm)	2.0 in. (5.0 cm)
	<i>Minutes to run each zone</i>			
0.25 in. (0.6 cm)	30	15	10	8
0.5 in. (1.3 cm)	60	30	20	15
0.75 in. (1.9 cm)	90	45	30	23
1.0 in. (2.5 cm)	120	60	40	30

To calculate the irrigation time for rates **not** listed in **Table 1**, use the following equation:

$$\text{Minutes Required to Run Each Zone} = \frac{\text{Amount of Water to be Applied} \times 60}{\text{Your Calibrated Irrigation Rate}}$$

## WET ONLY THE ROOT ZONE

Approximately ¾ of an inch of water each irrigation event, will wet about one foot of Florida sand, which will reach most grass, shrub and tree roots. By wetting only the root zone of plants, there is a dramatic saving in water, weeds are not encouraged to grow and plant growth is increased. Watering too deeply, past the feeder roots, will waste water. If not enough water is applied,



shallow root systems will develop and the plant will be unhealthy.

## USE SEPARATE SYSTEMS

Shrubs and other plants require less water than turf. If possible, (especially if installing a new system), consider putting in one system for the lawn and a separate one for shrubs and other plants. Rain sensors are required on ALL new irrigation systems.

If you want a healthy lawn and landscape, call **464-4000** and tell the representative "I want a healthy lawn", and a **FREE** packet of useful information will be sent directly to you.



Pinellas County Utilities  
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Clearwater, FL 33756



PINELLAS COUNTY UTILITIES

# Outdoor Water Conservation Action Guide

