

BEST PRACTICES: WATERING YOUR LAWN & GARDEN



Prepared in cooperation with the Texas Commission On Environmental Quality and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Efficient watering is essential to keeping your lawn and garden healthy while conserving Houston's water resources. Follow these best practices to help save water, reduce costs, and enhance your landscape's resilience.

Water My Yard App

This free app provides customized irrigation recommendations based on your yard type and Houston's local weather. Sign up at WaterMyYard.org or download the app for weekly advice by email or text.

Choosing an Irrigation System

- Drip irrigation is ideal for garden beds, delivering water directly to roots for minimal evaporation.
- Smart sprinklers & weather-based controllers automatically adjust watering based on rainfall and weather, helping you avoid over-watering.

Efficient Watering Techniques

- Water in the Early Morning (Before 8 AM): This reduces evaporation, ensuring roots absorb moisture effectively.
- Adjust Sprinklers: Avoid sidewalks and driveways to prevent waste.
- Soil Sensors: Install sensors to adjust automatically, saving water by preventing unnecessary watering after rain.
- Catch Can Test: This simple test helps measure how evenly your system distributes water.

Managing Irrigation System Leaks

- Routine Checks: Inspect your system monthly during the growing season for leaks, clogs, and damage.
- Monitor Water Usage: A sudden spike in your water bill could indicate a leak.
- Run & Repair: Periodically run the system and check for broken sprinkler heads or pooling water. Repair issues promptly to prevent waste.

Does Your Yard Need Water?

- Soil Check: If soil is dry 2-3 inches down, it's time to water.
- Grass Condition: Grass blades that appear dull or wilted signal dryness.
- Footprint Test: If footprints linger on your lawn, it needs water.

How Much & How Often to Water

- Aim for Soil Depth: Water enough to moisten the soil to a depth of 4-6 inches. This encourages deep roots, promoting drought tolerance.
- Frequency by Season:
 - Summer: No more than twice a week, adjusting for rainfall.
 - Spring/Fall: Once a week, adjusting for rainfall.
 - Winter: Turn off irrigation from Nov 1 to Feb 28 to avoid wasting water.

Additional Tips

- Native & Drought-Tolerant Plants: Choose native plants like Texas Sage and Black-Eyed Susan to reduce water needs.
- Mulching: Apply mulch to retain soil moisture, moderate temperature, and reduce evaporation.
- Rain Barrels: Collect rainwater to supplement your irrigation needs.

BY FOLLOWING THESE TIPS AND USING TOOLS LIKE THE WATER MY YARD APP, YOU CAN MAINTAIN A HEALTHY LANDSCAPE WHILE CONSERVING WATER, LOWERING YOUR WATER BILL, AND CONTRIBUTING TO A MORE SUSTAINABLE HOUSTON!

Visit the QR code
below to learn more.

