

West Extension Irrigation District

Tips for Saving Water—You CAN Make A Difference

Watering

- **Easy does it!** Water landscapes only when necessary. Most landscapes need an inch to two of water per week, including rainfall. Know how much water you need and how much you are applying.
 - **Know your soil.** In Umatilla and Irrigon, frequent watering is needed due to low moisture holding capacity—so three times per week for short periods is most efficient. Soils in Boardman tend to hold water longer due to shallow basalt.
 - **Don't overwater landscape.** It can cause yellowing leaves or poor plant health. Give plants only the amount of water that they need.
 - **Use low-angle sprinklers that produce droplets of water.** Sprinklers that spray the water high into the air or produce a mist or fine spray lose much of the water through evaporation.
- **Keep time.** Water landscapes before 10 a.m. or after 7 p.m., avoiding the hottest part of the day when water can be lost to evaporation.
- **Don't water on windy days.**
- **Set sprinklers to water the crop, not roadways and driveways.**
- **Use drip irrigation for shrub beds, gardens, and trees.** Drip irrigation systems apply water directly to the root, where it does the most good and reduces water loss from evaporation.
- **Adjust your watering habits** or irrigation system according to the weather and season.
- **Check your sprinkler or irrigation systems** regularly for any leaks and fix them.



Mowing

- **Don't cut the grass too short.** Longer blades of grass will reduce evaporation and root stress because shaded soil does not dry out as quickly.
- **Mow regularly with a sharp blade** so that only $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch is cut off each time. This practice will prevent the grass from turning yellow.
- **Leave grass clippings on the lawn.** Grass clippings contain valuable nutrients for the soil and plants. If left on the lawn, the clippings will reduce the need for additional, expensive fertilizers.

Planting

- **Use mulches in flower and shrub beds.** Mulches cover and shade soil, minimize evaporation, reduce weed growth, and slow erosion. Mulches also add a decorative appearance to the landscape.
- **Add 2 to 4 inches of organic material**, such as peat or compost, to the soil. Greater soil depth will increase the ability of the soil to retain moisture.
- **Use water-wise plants.** Native and adaptive plants will use less water and be resistant to local plant diseases and pests.
- **Recognize that different plants require different amounts of water.** Place your plants according to their water needs. Place plants that need occasional watering in one zone and those that only need natural rainfall in another zone. This way, you will not waste water on plants that don't need it.



Northwest Irrigation Network

http://www.irz.com/DotCOM/nin_view.htm



This website, sponsored by IRZ Consulting, shows the current week and next week's water needs for various plants and crops. You can use this site to be sure that you are watering enough, but not too much, to meet the needs of the plants you are growing. They will begin updating the site with current data by the end of March each year.