The following water activities are permissible under this mandatory twice a week watering program for irrigation systems and/or hose-end sprinklers:

- No restrictions on hand-held hose with nozzle, drip irrigation or soaker hose
- No restrictions on washing cars, planes, motor bikes, boats or other vehicles
- No restrictions on filling swimming pools or fountains
- No restrictions on power washing

The operation of landscape irrigation systems is limited to the hours between 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. of the following day during any two such periods in a given week.

St. Augustine grass is dormant from November through March. Water little or none during those periods.

Violations may result in a surcharge on your water bill

1st violation in any 12-month period = Notice/Warning
2nd violation in any 12-month period = $50
3rd violation in any 12-month period = $100
Each subsequent violation = $200

To report a water violation, call 936-522-3148

www.cityofconroe.org
Phone: 936-522-3148
**Water Wise Landscaping Tips**

**Use The Cycle and Soak Method**

Much of the soil in the City of Conroe has difficulty absorbing water. Running 15-20 minute cycles generally does not get the water down to where it needs to be - into the soil and not into the street.

Instead, split the run time into two or three parts. Simply run a zone for about 5 or 10 minutes, wait an hour and then repeat each zone. This deep watering system will force roots to grow deeply into the soil, protecting them in summer from high temperatures, and making the turf stronger and more able to resist disease and pests.

Water no more than one inch per week, including rainfall. Put several rain gauges at different locations in your yard. Run your system at the new settings, add the amount of water in the rain gauges and divide by the number of rain gauges. This will let you know if you are watering an inch or less per week. Adjust your system accordingly.

Add compost to your lawn in mid-spring and mid-fall. Compost greatly increases the soil’s ability to hold water, encourages the development of microbes and earthworms, and helps grass roots to penetrate deeper into the soil.

**Landscape Maintenance**

**When should I mow?**

Don’t cut more than a third of the grass blade at a time. A good rule of thumb is to keep grass about three inches long, especially during the summer.

**Should I bag my grass clippings?**

Grass clippings are high in nitrogen. So don’t bag them. The best thing to do is to use a mulching lawn mower and mulch them back into the lawn. Grass clippings can also be composted.

**How do I conserve soil moisture?**

On shrubs, trees and other landscape plants, add mulch. It helps soil conserve moisture and keeps soil at a moderate temperature. It also helps reduce weeds, prevents water runoff, aids in root development, reduces erosion, prevents soil compaction and adds beauty to your landscape.

**Should I add compost to my lawn?**

Good compost, added in mid-spring (around the middle of April) and mid-fall (around the middle of October), will greatly increase the soil’s ability to hold water, encourage the development of beneficial microbes and will help grass roots grow deeper and healthier.

**Irrigation Systems**

**How do I manage my programmable system?**

Adjust the settings to coincide with the Defined Irrigation Schedule. (See back of this brochure) Add a rain sensor to your system so that watering will be shut off during a rain.

Inspect your sprinkler heads regularly and remove dirt and debris. Also inspect them during a run cycle to make sure they are watering properly, are not broken, have no leaks and that the water is not directed into the street.

**What’s the best and most efficient irrigation system for non-turf areas?**

Drip irrigation. It gets water right to the roots of plants with minimal evaporation. It is by far the most efficient way to water plant beds, trees, shrubs and vegetable gardens. Drip systems have become very inexpensive, easy to install and readily available at hardware and big box stores and at some nurseries. Soaker hoses are also an inexpensive alternative.

**What about rainwater harvesting systems?**

Rainwater harvesting systems are ideal for watering plants. Rainwater is pure and contains small amounts of beneficial nitrogen.

**Create a Water-wise Landscape**

**Native Plants**

Use native plants and/or plants which are adapted to the high heat of summers here, more resistant to disease and pests which will also survive without excess amounts of water. Instead of having a yard of grass, plant drought-tolerant ground covers in some areas. Contact the Environmental and Water Conservation Manager of the City of Conroe, 936-522-3148 for more information about native and adapted plants or Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service (936-539-7822).

**Eliminate Pests**

**Mosquitoes**

Overwatering, especially when water runs off into the street, and into the storm drain, increases breeding sites for mosquitoes, including those that carry West Nile Virus. Runoff indicates overwatering. Eliminate all standing water, piles of brush and anywhere mosquitoes can breed.

**Take-All Patch, Brown Patch**

Watering too frequently significantly increases infections from these and other diseases and fungal infections. For healthier lawns, water only when needed.

**Chinch Bugs**

Frequent watering or overwatering promotes shallow root systems in St. Augustine grass, making it more susceptible to injury by chinch bugs. These practices also help promote thatch. Too much thatch is one of the main factors for chinch bug infestations. Overwatering saturates the soil, forcing out the oxygen, and killing the microbes which decompose thatch.

**Use an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program or go organic.**

Most pesticides are indiscriminate and kill beneficial insects and microbes as well as pests. Herbicides and fungicides are high in salts and also kill beneficial organisms. Use IPM or organic materials whenever possible.