

OUTDOOR TIPS

One inch of water per week in the summer will keep most Texas grasses healthy. To determine how long you should run your sprinklers, place straight-edged cans at different distances away from the sprinkler and time how long it takes to fill an average of 1 inch of water in each can.

Don't abuse the benefits of an automatic sprinkler system by over-watering. Set it to provide thorough but infrequent watering. Check sprinkler heads regularly to make sure they are working properly. Install rain shut-off devices and adjust sprinklers to eliminate coverage on pavement.

Prevent evaporation of water. Water lawns early in the morning or in the evening during the hotter summer months. Never water on windy days. Use drip irrigation systems for bedded plants, trees, or shrubs and use low-angle sprinklers for lawns. Cover pools and spas. This can save the equivalent of your pool volume each year!

Plant water-efficient, well-adapted, and/or native shrubs, trees, and grasses. Choose plants that are drought and heat tolerant and can survive the minimum winter temperatures in your area. In odd-shaped areas, use drought-tolerant groundcover instead of grass. Many cities provide lists of water-efficient plants.

Harvest the rain. Buy a rain barrel or a cistern and collect the water from your gutters to water your plants.

Use your water efficiently. Don't waste water by cleaning patios or sidewalks with it; use a broom. For plants that need more water, use a hose or watering can to give them additional water.

Keep grass 3 inches tall during the summer and don't cut more than one-third of its length at one time. Don't scalp lawns when mowing during hot weather. Taller grass holds moisture better. Leave lawn clippings on the lawn instead of bagging.

Use lots of mulch around your shrubs and trees. It will retain moisture, reduce run-off, moderate soil temperatures, and help with weed control.

Don't over-fertilize! Get a soil kit to determine what nutrients your soil needs. If you apply fertilizer only in the spring and fall, your grass will be healthy, use less water, and require less mowing.

Use a car wash that recycles water. If you are washing your car at home, use a bucket of soapy water and a hose nozzle that shuts off the water while you scrub.



Texas Water Development Board

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www.wateriq.org

Visit the following Web site for additional information.

www.epa.gov/watersense

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WATER CONSERVING TIPS



USING WATER MORE EFFICIENTLY will not only save money but, more importantly, will also help protect the quality of life of future Texans.

With the vastness of Texas, it's easy to forget two important facts about our state: we are subject to frequent droughts, and our population is projected to double in the next 50 years. The cost of developing new or additional supplies in that same time period is estimated to be \$30.7 billion.

To ensure that we have enough cost-effective water for current and future Texans, we need to reduce the amount of water we waste.