Other Tips

- **During periods of wet weather,** you should shut your controller off temporarily to conserve water and take advantage of Mother Nature's contribution. Be sure to restart your system after the rainy season has passed. Inspect your system to make sure it is in working condition and able to deliver the correct amount of irrigation required. Very hot periods or windy conditions may require extra irrigation to compensate for excessive water loss from your lawn.
- Deeper, less frequent irrigations are best for most lawns as they promote deep root growth. If you notice excessive runoff or brown spots when watering less frequently, or if your controller cannot accommodate large blocks of time, spread the total required weekly minutes over multiple days.
- Some irrigation controllers will have a water budget or percentage place on a dial. Set the controller for the highest requirement month (July) as 100%, then each month just change the percentage up or down as indicated by the relative time shown on the watering tables.

Call the WRA, we can assist you with your irrigation controller!

Watering Tables:

Warm-Season Turfgrasses

Minutes per week to irrigate if your hourly sprinkler output is:

	0.5 in	1.0 in	1.5 in	2.0 in
JAN	32	16	11	08
FEB	44	22	15	11
MAR	69	35	23	17
APR	95	47	32	24
MAY	113	57	38	28
JUN	113	57	38	28
JUL	132	66	44	33
AUG	126	63	42	32
SEP	107	54	36	27
OCT	76	38	25	19
NOV	44	22	15	11
DEC	32	16	11	08

Cool-Season Turfgrasses

Minutes per week to irrigate if your hourly sprinkler output is:

	0.5 in	1.0 in	1.5 in	2.0 in
JAN	42	21	14	11
FEB	59	29	20	15
MAR	92	46	31	23
APR	126	63	42	32
MAY	151	76	50	38
JUN	151	76	50	38
JUL	176	88	59	44
AUG	168	84	56	42
SEP	143	71	48	36
OCT	101	50	34	25
NOV	59	29	20	15
DEC	42	21	14	11

Do you know you could use less water and have a healthier lawn?

Residential Lawn Watering Guide

***Adapted from University of California "ANR Publication 8044"**

Water Resources Association of San Benito County

Tel. 831.637.4378
www.wrasbc.org

The WRA is a non-profit corporation focused on water resource management in San Benito County, representing the City of Hollister, the City of San Juan Bautista, the Sunnyslope County Water District and the San Benito County Water District

Most of us use drinking water to grow our lawns, flowers and other plants. On average, we use about two thirds of our water outdoors, most of which goes to lawns. As much as one half of the water is wasted through incorrect watering.

1. Do you know how much water you apply each time you irrigate your lawn?

2. Are you applying the water to your lawn evenly (distribution pattern)?

3. Do you know when your lawn needs water?

Step 1.

Determine what type of lawn you have.

- Warm-season grass include hybrid bermudagrass, common bermudagrass, zoysiagrass, St. Augustinegrass and kikuyugrass.

  Dichondra is a broadleaf groundcover with water requirements similar to those of warm-season turfgrass.

- Cool-season grasses include tall fescue, Kentucky bluegrass, annual and perennial ryegrass and bentgrass.

Step 2.

To check the distribution pattern, you will need at least six containers. Straight sided containers like soup cans or milk cartons are fine, but tuna cans are too shallow and water splashes out.

A. Place the six or more containers in a grid pattern over the lawn area to be checked.

B. Run your sprinklers for 20 minutes and use a ruler to measure (in inches) the depth of the water in each container. To determine the average depth of water applied to the lawn, total the water depths for all the containers and divide the total amount by the number of containers you used.

C. Multiply the average depth by three to determine how many inches of water your sprinkler applies per hour.

Sample calculation:

Can #1 1/2 inch (0.500)

Can #2 5/8 inch (0.625)

Can #3 1/2 inch (0.500)

Can #4 3/8 inch (0.375)

Can #5 1/2 inch (0.500)

Can #6 3/8 inch (0.375)

TOTAL FOR 6 CANS:

2 7/8 inches (2.875 inches)

2.875 inches = 0.479 inch/can
(Average depth per can)

0.479 inch x 3 = 1.437 inches per hour

*Check and repair clogged, damaged, or broken sprinkler heads. Also look for sprinklers that may be set into the ground too deeply or tilted. Sprinklers should be vertical and should not be obstructed by surrounding grass, plants, or other objects.

Step 3.

Using the tables on the back side of this brochure locate the column that is closest to your sprinkler output and turf type. Intersect that column with the current month. The result will be the time your lawn should be watered in "**Minutes per Week**" based on historical climate data.

Set your controller with the current date and time. Select the **three days of the week** you wish to water your lawn. Set start times for early morning to finish before the heat of the day and the wind picks up.

Take the previously determined "Minutes per Week" and divide it by 3. You will use this number for the three watering days you have selected. Most controllers have **multiple start times** as an option. If yours does, divide those daily minutes among several start times to minimize runoff.

Sample Setup:

Output of sprinklers as determined in Step 2: 1.5 inches per hour. For the month of July, the "Cool-Season" turfgrass table says you should be watering for 59 minutes per week. Round up to 60 minutes.

Divide 60 weekly minutes by 3 days = 20 minutes 3 days a week.

Divide 20 minutes among 3 start times:
Start time #1 = 7 minute run time. Start time #2 = 7 minute start time. Start time #3 = 6 minute run time. Allow enough time between start times for the controller to complete its entire program. Try to allow at least an hour between start times so the previous water application can soak in before the next application begins.

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