

## Tips for Turning on Your Sprinkler System

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Sprinkler systems all around the Truckee Meadows are coming out of hibernation following a long, cold winter. Local lawn services are scrambling to turn on sprinkler systems now that the weather has warmed up. Scott Leonard of Signature Landscapes says his crews are responding to calls from customers who are ready to start watering. "The weather changed from last week and freezing temperatures to near 80 degrees right now. It's about getting water on as fast as we can," said Leonard.

Sometimes the long winters can cause leaks, which eventually show up on your water bill. Leonard said the first thing to do is look for problems above ground. "If you're going to turn it on yourself, go through each zone. Walk your property, make sure there are no drip breaks, check your sprinklers, look for clogged valves," he said.

Another important tip is to check your water meter to make sure your system isn't leaking. "Inside the water pit is your gauge," said Leonard. "There's a small red wheel, if it's turning there's a leak," he added.

"So you want all your household water off, come out and check it. If everything's off and it's spinning, then it's time to call somebody to come out and investigate for a leak," Leonard explained.

Andy Gebhardt of the Truckee Meadows Water Authority says you can also check your water bill. "If your bill is higher than you think it should be, you might want to take a good look and see if something's going on," he said.

Once the sprinklers are on and working properly, it's important not to over water. Experts say right now about 5 minutes three times a day on your assigned watering days should do the trick. "Start it up slowly, give it a little drink. But you don't want to flood it early. It'll thrive," said Gebhardt.

The Truckee Meadows Water Authority is holding a free a workshop on Wednesday, April 9th at 5:30 to explain how to turn on your irrigation system. The address is 1355 Capital Blvd. in Reno.

*Written by Jennifer Burton*