WATERING IN OUR HIGH-DEMAND REGION

Water on Your Assigned Days
If the last number in your address is odd (1, 3, 5, 7, or 9), water on Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays. If your address is odd (0, 2, 4, 6, or 8), water only on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. If the last number in your address is odd (1, 3, 5, 7, or 9), water on Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays. If your address is odd (0, 2, 4, 6, or 8), water only on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Non-watering between noon and 6 p.m. from Memorial Day through Labor Day. Marionites are a no-watering day to replenish and maintain the water system.

Water Deeper, Less Often
Deep, intermittent watering works best in our dry climate because it promotes deeper roots that support healthy vegetation. Light, frequent watering is not recommended because it encourages shallow roots that dry out rapidly, especially in hot summer days.

Water... Water until the soil is saturated at the roots; then turn off the sprinklers. For sloped yards where runoff begins within minutes, we recommend short run times more often throughout your watering day. 6 Wait... Let the water soak down to the roots, waiting about one to two hours. Repeat this process until the water reaches a depth of six to eight inches. Measure by marking a six-inch stake 2 feet away and easily go in as deep as it is available.

Automatic Sprinklers
The “Water – Wait” method can also be utilized by setting your sprinkler controller (timer) to water in cycles. For example, if your irrigation controller is set for one cycle of 30 minutes, adjust the controller for two start times at 10 minutes each or three cycles at 10 minutes each with one to two hours in between each start time. Thirty minutes of watering will occur, but with a technique that eliminates waste and encourages watering to the roots and not the streets.

Multiple start times should be added during the heat of the watering season. July and August are the hottest months and should have the most start times on your sprinkler system. The spring and fall months should have less start times because temperatures are milder. And remember to water only on your assigned days according to the Assigned-Day watering schedule. For more free tips, visit www.communityforestry.org.

WATERING TIPS FOR TREES & SHRUBS
Trees and lawn compete for water. It is ideal to keep trees out of your lawn. When planting, dig basins around trees and shrubs to help water directly over the roots, and provide good drainage. Newly planted trees need a lot of water to establish itself. The newly planted tree needs to be watered out on the root ball and surrounding area. However, as the tree matures, the emitters need to be relocated outward toward the tree’s drip line. During dry weather, remember that trees and shrubs require additional water.

WATERING NEW LAWNS
New lawns require a lot of water to get established. If you’re planting a new lawn from seed by planting and tilling, it’s best to water in the spring or fall until full when temperatures are cooler and there is less stress on the lawn. TMWA recommends customers to obtain a 6-week watering schedule when establishing new lawns. To obtain a schedule, please email conservation@tmwa.org or call TMWA’s Conservation Helpline at 530.434.0555.

WATERING GUIDE:

Watering in the High-Demand Region

Water on Your Assigned Days
Assigned-Day

6 Wait

Free Irrigation Workshops
TMWA offers free irrigation workshops for customers every spring and fall. For details visit www.tmwa.com.

Guide to Assigned-Day Watering and Lawn Care in the Truckee Meadows

How Often to Water
When temperatures are mild (in the 60s and 70s), watering one day a week in all of your landscape needs. As temperature increases (80s and 90s), watering on your assigned day is recommended. For properly trained turf, this is enough even during the hottest part of the summer. Please don’t water on this day or during the heat of the day. Not only can this burn your lawn, but evaporation is high. In addition, TMWA rules and local ordinances prohibit watering between noon and 6 p.m. from Memorial Day through Labor Day.

Watering Tips for Trees & Shrubs
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Questions?
For more information, visit our website at www.tmwa.com. Expert advice on gardening can be found by calling the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension at 784-4848.
Lawn Care

Fertilizing

Proper fertilizer will make your lawn green and healthier. Never over-fertilize with strong fertilizers or water and watch your lawn and plants will be damaged. Remember to water and fertilize only if there has been no rain or sun for more than a few days. A soil test is usually available at your local county extension service.

Four Steps to Effective Fertilizing

Follow these steps when fertilizing your lawn: Follow the manufacturer’s instructions. Your lawn should be watered 2-3 times after fertilizing and the next day. Keep on sprinkling water all day long. This is the time to be particular with your sprinkler system.

Hose-end Sprinklers

Hand-held and portable sprinklers need to be inspected for leaks and clogs. Be sure to check the water bill, costing you a lot of money. Do not use the water bill, costing you a lot of money. Do not use the water meter to water the lawn. Never mow a wet lawn. Sharpen the blades of a reel mower every year. Use a decked out mower to get your blades sharp.

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Lawn Care Throughout the Year

The way you water will greatly affect the health of your landscape during the growing season.

Spring

This is the time to encourage deep root growth – usually in April and May. Water deeply, once every other week or so, to allow the water to penetrate the root zone. Never water the lawn and plants will be damaged. Remember to water and fertilize only if there has been no rain or sun for more than a few days. A soil test is usually available at your local county extension service.

Landscape Techniques and Care Tips can be found at www.tmslawncare.com.

Winter

Check the sprinkler for leaks, clogs and malfunctions. Always check the sprinkler for leaks, clogs and malfunctions. Always check the sprinkler for leaks, clogs and malfunctions.

Save Money and Decrease Runoff with a Lawn Buffer

Lawn Care

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**Fertilizing**

Automatic sprinkler systems can help maintain your lawn greener and healthier year-round. They help ensure that your lawn will remain lush and thick, and better able to resist insects and diseases.

**Your Lawn Needs Nitrogen**

To stay healthy, lawn tissue has to contain more nitrogen than a year ago, a 20,000 square foot area of lawn needs 48 pounds of nitrogen. For example, if a 100-pound bag of fertilizer has a 20% nitrogen content, that means that for every 20 pounds of fertilizer, 4 pounds is nitrogen. So, to get to 4 pounds of nitrogen, you would need to use five pounds of fertilizer (5 lb. x 20% nitrogen = 1 lb. of 100% nitrogen). Therefore, to give your lawn four pounds of nitrogen, it should be fertilized four times a year: once in late March or early April, once in late May or early June, once in mid-July, and once in mid-October. These four applications will give your lawn all the nutrients it needs to grow quickly and healthy.

**Chemical Fertilizer**

Your fertilizer’s composition should vary somewhat. Fertilizers with only nitrogen can be used for the first three applications. However, in the October application, use a balanced fertilizer that contains phosphorus and potassium as well as nitrogen. This will enhance root development and growth.

**Four Steps to Effective Fertilizing**

Follow these steps when fertilizing your lawn:

1. **Check the Ground** — Rainfall or irrigation releases nitrogen to the soil, so do not apply fertilizer on a day following a recent rain. Fertilization can be done at any time, even during the day, as long as you allow your sprinkler to dry completely before or after planting.

2. **Lighten your lawn before applying fertilizer**.

3. **Spread the recommended amount of fertilizer using a walk-behind or spreader-bin spreader**. Be sure to follow the time of day that is specified on the fertilizer bag, which may specify “morning” or “late afternoon.”

4. **Hand-held and portable sprinklers need to be inspected**. If it’s leaking, these tips are only a partial guide to sprinkler maintenance.

**Starting and Ending the Irrigation Season Right**

**Give Automatic Sprinklers a Spring Tune-Up**

Before you start spring watering, take the time to check your system:

1. Make sure all manual valves are closed. An open drop valve will leak water and increase your water bill, costing you a lot of money. You may never even see the water, as it is absorbed by the ground.
2. Open the main valve to the sprinkler system.
3. Check all valve areas for dirt and escape holes.
4. Clean sprinkler to make sure spray patterns are uniform.
5. Check the vacuum breaker for leaks and spring tension. This prevents the backflow of irrigation water into your home’s drinking water pipe.
6. Adjust all sprinklers so they spray the landscape, not the sidewalk, driveway or street.
7. Set the timer for normal times and watering.
8. Change the battery in the timer if it has not been changed for a while.

**Fall Shut-Down**

In the fall, as your landscape is being prepared for winter, your sprinkler system should be shut down. Here’s how:

**Automatic Sprinklers**

1. Close the main valve to the sprinkler system.
2. Open all control valves.
3. Inspect the hoses and sprinklers.
4. Drain the vacuum breaker (this may freeze and break if not drained).
5. Allow a couple of hours for system drainage.
6. Consider using the control valves and the manual drain valves.
7. Check the vacuum breaker to protect it against freezing. Optional.
8. Turn off the timer and unplug it.

**Check the time zone for your area by visiting the Irrigation Time Zone website.**

**Lawn Care**

**Cool Lawns are Healthy Lawns**

Transpiration is the process of water from the plant to the air. If grasses are kept at the proper mow height, the water transpired through the plant is greater than the water added to the new lawn if simply added to the run-on problem.

**De-thatching**

Thatch is the accumulation of leaves, stems and roots that build up on top of the soil and the thatch layer. It can be a hard, persistent layer on top of the soil where a lawn has raised two to three inches. Thatch prevents water and air from reaching the soil, restricts root growth and, as thatch builds up, causes additional stress on the plant as more and more thatch is added to the plant’s roots. To de-thatch, the plant is removed using a de-thatching tool. This can be done with a power rake.

**Aerating**

Small cores, or plugs, must be made in the soil to allow water, fertilizer and roots to penetrate the soil. This process is called aeration. Punching the turf can be done with an aerator, a machine that removes small plugs from the thatch and soil.

When to De-thatch & Aerate

These operations should be performed in the spring to allow the lawn to rejuvenate throughout the growing season. Aeration and de-thatching should be performed before the start of an ongoing maintenance program that everyone’s lawn should receive. The frequency of de-thatching and aeration varies from once to four years, depending on your soil type. Aeration and de-thatching for two to three times an year can help maintain a lawn and de-thatching every seven to ten years. An aerator plug that has a chuck of turf being removed is called de-thatching and every seven to ten years. An aerator plug that has a chuck of turf being removed is called de-thatching.

**Mowing**

Moving hills reduces the water and the vigor of your lawn. In addition, mowing affects your lawn’s root development. Transpiration of water through the grass blades, root resistance and photosynthesis are all affected. When the grass is too long, it affects the plant’s ability to prevent sun “scald.” It is also important to remember that your lawn does not resemble the closely cropped “green carpet” look of a golf course. Golf course grasses are usually a special hybrid that is meant to be short.

Most landscapes and care tips can be found at the WorldofIrrigation.com page.

**water**

1. Use a walk-behind and portable sprinkler that is not working properly should be replaced. A malfunctioning sprinkler may cause the use of a walk-behind or spreader-bin spreader, which, usually results in uneven distribution.

2. If the water feels and leaves are anything but dry, a “sprinkler” is not working properly should be replaced. A malfunctioning sprinkler may cause the use of a walk-behind or spreader-bin spreader, which, usually results in uneven distribution.

3. When you water, use a “Wet and Wasted” method.

4. Always use a sharp blade when mowing your lawn. A dull blade will cause the turf to rip and shred, which results in stress and a weaker root system.

5. Cool Lawns are Healthy Lawns

Transpiration is the process of water from the plant to the air. If grasses are kept at the proper mow height, the water transpired through the plant is greater than the water added to the new lawn if simply added to the run-on problem.

**Save Money and Decrease Runoff with a Lawn Buffer**

Other, when customers water their lawns, there is no runoff, making it easier on the soil quality and microorganisms. As water flows off the lawn, it will flow through the buffer zone and soak into the soils. This weakens the grass and leaves behind small plugs which will decay and evaporate from the sprinkler. This weakens the grass and leaves behind small plugs which will decay and evaporate from the sprinkler.

**Lawn Care throughout the year**

The way you water will greatly affect the health of your landscape during the growing season.

**Spring**

This is the time to encourage root growth — usually in April and May. Water deeply, once every other day, to start; then water evenly once every other day until June. The “Water” method is usually in one of your assigned days. Other laws may need to be changed from readings and sending out to help controls water without water.

**Summer**

By June, your landscape will be conditioned and ready for Assigned-Day watering through August. Be sure to continue using the “Water” method — and only water during your assigned days.

**Fall**

September and October are the cool down months. Be sure to prepare your landscape for its winter rest. Be sure to water one day a week, tapering off to every other week as colder weather approaches. A balanced fertilizer will help your lawn develop stronger roots and store nutrients over the winter period.

**Winter**

From November through February, your lawn and plants will be dormant. Remember to water once and simulate that there is no rain or snow for one more time before you shut down your sprinkler system for the winter.

**Check the sprinkler for leaks, clogs and malfunctions.**

**Check hoses for leaks and slugs.**

Use these guidelines to properly check your sprinkler system throughout the summer. At the end of the season, prepare your landscape for its winter rest. Be sure to water one day a week, tapering off to every other week as colder weather approaches. A balanced fertilizer will help your lawn develop stronger roots and store nutrients over the winter period.
Watering in Our High-Desert Region

Water on Your Assigned Days
If the last number in your address is odd (1, 3, 5, 7, or 9), water only on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. If the last number in your address is odd (1, 3, 5, 7, or 9), water on Thursday, Friday, and Sunday. No watering between noon and 6 p.m. from Memorial Day through Labor Day. Mondays are no-watering days to replenish and maintain the water system.

Water Deeper, Less Often
Deep, intermittent watering works best in our dry climate because it promotes deeper roots that survive hot weather. Light, frequent watering is not recommended because it encourages shallow roots that dry out rapidly, especially on hot summer days.

Still, virtually every plant in your yard will benefit from thorough, less frequent watering. Only new lawns, plant beds, and a very few naturally shallow-rooted mature plants (flowering dogwood, rhododendrons) will need watering often enough to keep the topsoil moist all of the time.

In our high-desert, clay-based soil that allows little to absorb water—five to six times as sandy soils found in other parts of the West—new lawns and most perennials are designed to deliver water faster than our soil can absorb it. Therefore, we recommend you use the "Water Well" method to help soil better absorb the water.

Water... Water until soil cuts form or your garden begins to turn. Then turn off the sprinklers. For sloped yards where runoff begins within minutes, we recommend short run times more often throughout your watering day.

6 & Wait
Let the water soak down to the roots, watering about one to two hours. Repeat this process until the water reaches a depth of six to eight inches. Measure by marking a stick inserted into the soil. It will easily go six in deep as this is the moisture.

Automatic Sprinklers
The “Water & Wait” method can also be utilized by setting your sprinkler controller (timer) to water in cycles. For example, if your irrigation controller is set for one cycle of 30 minutes, adjust the controller for two starts at 15 minutes each or three cycles at 10 minutes each with one to two hours in between each start. Thirty minutes of watering still works, but with a technique that eliminates waste and encourages watering to the roots and not the streets.

Multiple start times should be adjusted during the heat of the watering season. July and August are the hottest months and should have the most start times on your sprinkler system. The spring and fall months should have less start times because temperatures are milder. And remember to water only on your assigned days according to the Assigned-Day watering schedule.

Free Irrigation Workshops
This fall offers free irrigation workshops for customers every spring and fall. For details visit www.tmwa.com.

How Often to Water
When temperatures are mild (in the 60s and 70s), watering once a day is all your landscape needs. As temperatures hover (80s and 90s), watering on your assigned days is recommended. For properly trained yards, this is enough even during the hottest part of the summer. Please don’t water when it’s windy or during the heat of the day. Not only can this burn your lawn, but evaporation is high. In addition, TMWA rules and local ordinances prohibit watering between noon and 6 p.m. from Memorial Day through Labor Day.

Watering Tips for Trees & Shrubs
Once trees and shrubs are established, it is ideal to keep trees wet out of your lawn. When planting, dig basins around trees and shrubs to keep water directly to the roots, and provide good drainage. Newly planted trees and shrubs in a dry system must have the emitters located closer to the root ball and surrounding area. However, as the tree matures, the emitters need to be relocated outward, toward the tree’s drip. During dry conditions, remember that trees and shrubs require additional water.

For more tree care tips, visit www.communityforestry.org.

Watering New Lawns
New lawns require a lot of water to get established. If you’re planting a new lawn from seed by broadcasting out, it’s best to do it in the spring or fall when temperatures are cooler and there is less stress on the lawn. TMWA requires customers to obtain a 5-day watering variance when establishing new lawns. To obtain a variance, please email conservation@tmwa.com or call TMWA’s Conservation Hotline at 530.463.0485.

Guide to Assigned-Day Watering and Lawn Care in the Truckee Meadows

Watering in the high desert, lawns and other plants need strong root systems to stay healthy. This guide is designed to help you keep your plant green and healthy throughout the year, while encouraging responsible use of water at all times.

During the summer, demand on the water system is extremely high. Our customers’ water usage increases 400%—or about 130 million gallons per day system-wide. Outdoor watering is the primary reason for this increase. Therefore, it is especially important for all customers to manage their usage during the summer. The Assigned-Day watering plan is the cornerstone for efficient water management throughout the year. A direct benefit of the program is the balance and management of peak-day flow throughout our water system. This has helped Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) avoid costly facility expansions that would increase rates for all our customers. As an added bonus, responsible water user at home and at work saves money on your water bill.

Customers often wonder if the water we save is used for growth. The answer is no. Water saved by current customers is not absorbed to be used for growth. The unused water is retained for future demands in the Truckee River. It cannot be re-adapted for new homes or buildings.

So, when preparing and irrigating your yard throughout the year, be sure to follow these helpful tips. You will keep your landscape/healthy and water demands down for the entire community, all while saving money on your bill.

Frequently Asked Questions

Watering new lawns is more efficient than midday watering. Midday watering is the primary way other water systems waste and encourages water to reach the roots and not the streets.

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GUIDE TO Assigned-Day WATERING and LAWN CARE in THE TRUCKEE MEADOWS

No watering between noon and 6 p.m. from Memorial Day through Labor Day.

Mondays are no-watering days to replenish and maintain the water system.

Please don’t water when it’s raining or windy, or when temperatures are too high.

Check your irrigation clock routinely and adjust according to watering needs.

TRUCKEE MEADOWS WATER AUTHORITY
Quality. Delivered.

Truckee Meadows Water Authority is a non-profit, community-owned water utility, overseen by elected officials and citizen appointed from Reno, Sparks and Washoe County.

www.tmwa.com