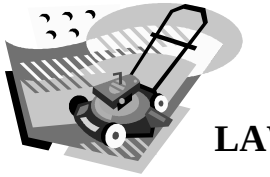

LAWN CARE

1. **Water deeply** 3-6 inches down and infrequently (only a few times per week) to encourage deeper root systems, especially in spring (root growth is occurring).

2. **Water for short periods** instead of a single long irrigation, ("repeat cycling"). For example, apply 15 minutes of irrigation in three 5-minute applications, separated by at least one hour each. This reduces runoff and allows water to penetrate the soil more deeply.

3. **Water before sunrise** (2:00am to 8:00am is perfect) to reduce water evaporation due to wind and heat.

4. **Dethatch and aerate** your lawn occasionally. This helps water penetrate the soil and reach the grass roots.

5. **Raise the height of your mower** to 2" for bluegrass, rye and fescue type lawns, to 1" if you have bermudagrass, or dichondra.

6. **Adjust sprinklers to apply water evenly** so water from each sprinkler head just reaches adjacent sprinklers heads ("head-to-head" coverage) to maximize <u>even</u> application of water.

7. **Adjust sprinklers to water planted areas only.** Avoid watering sidewalks,

SMART IRRIGATION PRACTICES

Use these practical tips to reduce water use and improve the health and beauty of your plants.

Encourage deeper roots - Early each spring put your yard on a water-wise campaign. Simply extend the time between watering days to encourage your plants to grow deeper roots. Plants with deeper roots can go longer between watering days and tolerate stress.

Apply water only when it's needed - Don't assume your yard needs water. Check the soil before watering. Water when…

- ✔ Grass: soil is dry down to 2-3", or step on the grass. If it springs back up, it doesn't need water. If it stays flat, it's time to water.
- ✔ Groundcover: soil is dry down to 4-6".
- ✔ Shrubs: soil is dry down to 4-6".
- ✔ Trees: soil is dry down to 4-6".

Reduce runoff - Water for short periods rather than one long period, a practice called "repeat cycling". For example, apply 15 minutes of irrigation in three 5-minute periods separated by at least one hour each. This will reduce water lost to runoff and will increase the depth that water penetrates the soil.

Reduce evaporation - Water early to reduce water lost to heat and wind (between 2:00am – 8:00am is perfect).

Water Smart Gardening

LAWN WATERING GUIDE

Water Conservation Program
543-3985

LAWN IRRIGATION SCHEDULING GUIDE

Have you ever wondered if you were watering your lawn enough? Too much? The following guide will help you apply just the right amount of water.

Visit us on the web!
http:/ci.santa-rosa.ca.us/wc

FIRST, discover how quickly your sprinklers apply water (precipitation rate).

This simple test tells you how much water your sprinklers apply (precipitation rate). Here's how:

- Set out five or more straight-sided cans on a typical section of your lawn. Place some cans in areas that seem to receive the least water.
- Water for exactly 15 minutes.
- Measure the depth of water in each can and determine the average water depth (add up the measurements in the cans and then divide by the number of cans).
- Multiply the average depth by 4 to calculate the "precipitation rate" (how much water your sprinklers apply in inches per hour).

SECOND, figure out the total amount of time to run your sprinklers for each week for the current month.

Take a look at the chart below. Find your precipitation rate. Find the current month. See where these two meet.

This is the total number of minutes to water each week this month.

THIRD, figure out how many days to water in the week.

- If it's cool, try 1 or 2 days per week.
- If it's warm, try 2 or 3 days per week.
- If it's hot, try 3 or 4 days per week.

Space watering days equally apart throughout the week.

FOURTH, figure out the length of time to run your sprinklers each day.

Divide the total number of minutes to water each week by the number of days to water each week. This is the total number of minutes to irrigate each watering day.

FINALLY, divide the daily total into short periods instead of one long irrigation.

This "repeat cycle" practice will reduce the chances of runoff and allow water to penetrate the soil more deeply.

Santa Rosa Lawn Watering Chart

The chart is a guide based on historical weather data. If the weather is unseasonably cool or hot or wet, you can adjust the schedule accordingly.

PRECIPITATION RATE (inches per hour)

	½	¾	1	1 ¼	1 ½	1 ¾	2	2 ¼	2 ½	2 ¾	3
TOTAL NUMBER OF MINUTES TO WATER (weekly)											
APR	88	58	44	35	29	25	22	19	18	16	15
MAY	115	77	58	46	38	33	29	26	23	21	19
JUN	146	98	73	59	49	42	37	33	29	27	24
JUL	166	110	83	66	55	47	41	37	33	30	28
AUG	139	93	70	56	46	40	35	31	28	25	23
SEP	88	58	44	35	29	25	22	19	18	16	15
OCT	47	31	23	19	16	13	12	10	9	9	8

For example, apply 15 minutes of irrigation in three 5-minute applications separated by at least one hour each (you could set your automatic irrigation timer to run at 2am, 4am, and 6am for five minutes each time).