



# Kenosha Water Utility

## Tips for Efficient Watering

### Water Early

Water during the coolest part of the day, to reduce evaporation. The best time to water your lawn is early morning (5-10AM).

### Water Efficiently

Use a sprinkler that throws large drops of water close to the ground. Sprinklers which throw mist or small droplets of water high in the air, result in excessive evaporation. Traveling sprinklers are among the most efficient.

### Only Water When Your Lawn is Dry

Don't water every day. Stick a screwdriver into the soil. If it offers little resistance to a depth of 6 inches, the soil has adequate moisture. Another simple test is to step on the grass. Grass will lie flat if the moisture is low. If the blades bounce back quickly, wait a day or two to water. Pay attention to the color of your lawn. When it is under stress it will change color, becoming more blue-green.

### Aerate Your Lawn

Aeration loosens soil and reduces compaction. After aeration, more water will reach the roots, resulting in less run-off. Aerate your lawn once or twice a year.

### Measure Sprinkler Output

Measure your sprinkler output by placing three or more cans in various locations throughout the sprinkler pattern. Turn on your sprinkler for fifteen minutes. The average depth of water in the cans will tell you how much water the sprinkler has applied.

### Sprinkler Coverage Area

Make sure your sprinkler waters just the lawn. Water on sidewalks, driveways and streets is a waste. Avoid run-off by reducing the volume from the sprinkler heads close to the street. Avoid watering on windy days.

### Perform Sprinkler System Checks

Underground automatic sprinkler systems should be adjusted to accommodate changes in seasonal water demand. Remember, they are semi-automatic and require periodic checks throughout the summer. If you have an automatic system, adjust the time clock as the temperature changes to give your plants only the amount of water they need to stay healthy. If you have a manual system, carefully watch a clock or set a kitchen timer.

### Deep Soak Your Lawn

Water once or twice a week, allowing time for the moisture to soak down to the roots (6-8 inches). Frequent light waterings encourages shallow root growth. Shallow root systems are not tolerant to drought. If your soil type will not allow you to deep-soak your lawn, split your watering times into two or more blocks to allow the soil to absorb the water.

### Know Your Plant's Water Needs

Different plants and turf grasses require varying amounts of water. A healthy, growing bluegrass lawn will require about one-half inch of water per week in early May and one to two inches per week during the mid-summer months. Adjust watering to include rainfall.

### Know Your Soil Type

Know your soil type before you water. When water runs off your lawn and into the street, it often means that the soil is unable to absorb water as fast as it is being applied. As a simple guide, clay soils require slow watering. Clay soils dry out slowly and need infrequent watering. Sandy soils dry out quickly and require more frequent watering. Loam soils are a combination of clay, sand and silt. Most of the soils in Wisconsin are of the silt-loam type. Install a moisture sensor in each automatic sprinkler zone for the most efficient use of water.