



SOUTHEASTERN COLORADO

Water Conservancy District

"Your investment in water"

Water Wise Demonstration Garden

Lawn Watering Guide for Southeastern Colorado

Watering Tips

- Water late in the evening or early in the morning.
- Water infrequently but thoroughly to promote vigorous root growth and allow the lawn to benefit from rainfall.
- Minimize runoff by allowing for soak-time between several shorter watering cycles.
- Run your sprinklers during periods of low wind. Sprinkler performance and efficiency decrease rapidly as wind speed increases.
- Water when your lawn shows the need. A change of color and foot prints that remain for a long time indicate a thirsty lawn.
- If a small area is dry, water that spot by hand.
- Check regularly for broken or missing sprinkler heads. Make sure sprinklers are adjusted properly to water your lawn, not the pavement.
- To increase irrigation efficiency consider using new technology like rain, wind, and temperature shut off devices, evapotranspiration (ET) controllers, and soil moisture probes.

Measuring Sprinkler Precipitation Rates

1. Set out 6 identical cans (tuna cans work well) between sprinkler heads in the same sprinkler zone
2. Run the sprinklers for 10 minutes
3. Pour all of the water into one can
4. Measure and record the depth
5. Repeat for each sprinkler zone

This is your sprinkler precipitation rate in inches per hour.



Match that sprinkler output rate with how much water your type of lawn requires weekly using the tables on the right. This will give you a total weekly runtime. Divide that number by 2 or 3 depending on how many times per week you plan on running your sprinklers.

Now you can set your irrigation timer and know that you aren't under or overwatering.

Irrigation Comparison

Annual Water Needs

Bluegrass	24-26"
Tall Fescue	20-22"
Fine Fescue	18-20"
Buffalograss	8-10"

Summer Water Needs (Weekly)

Bluegrass	1.5 - 2.0"
Buffalograss	0.25 - 0.50"

Watering one acre of grass turf with one inch of water amounts to 27,176 gallons of water. In Colorado lawns are irrigated from May to November during the active growing season and at that rate of watering totals 815,280 gallons used per acre every year. Some grasses may even require 2-3 inches per week.

Buffalograss is a popular warm-season native grass alternative that only requires 1-2 inches of water every 2-4 weeks during the summer to look acceptably green and discourage weeds.

Runtime Calculator

In Minutes

		Inches of Water Needed					
		1/4"	3/8"	1/2"	5/8"	3/4"	1"
Sprinkler Output	1/4"	60	90	120	150	180	240
	3/8"	40	60	80	100	120	160
	1/2"	30	45	60	75	90	120
	5/8"	24	36	48	60	72	96
	3/4"	20	30	40	50	60	80
	7/8"	18	27	34	43	52	69
	1"	15	23	30	38	45	60

More information can be found on our website:

[www.secwcd.org/
content/turf-
replacement](http://www.secwcd.org/content/turf-replacement)

