

Guide for Managing Your Landscape's Water Needs

Too Little Water

Look for Stress Symptoms:

- Wilting plants
- Plants with large leaves show dry, crisp, curled leaf edges.
- Interior foliage begins to yellow and drop.
- Plants lose shine on leaves and look dull.
- Soil around plants is dry and hard to insert a screwdriver more than 1-2 inches.
- Soil begins to crack open.
- Soil in containers shrinks away from edges.

Too Much Water

Look for Stress Symptoms:

- Wilting plants
- Leaf tips are brown and leathery, but not dry.
- Leaves droop where attached to stem and look water-soaked.
- Entire plant begins to yellow then turn brown or grey.
- New foliage is smaller, paler and scorches quickly on leaf edges before leaf reaches mature size.
- Plants directly next to irrigation heads are a paler green.
- Plant is very loose in soil because of root dieback/rot.
- Soil very wet and stinky when 6-10" deep shovel sample taken.
- Slug, snail and pill bugs are present.
- Algae growth on hard surfaces, or moss growing between pavers.
- Fungus gnats infest container soil.

Shrubs and Beds

- Water mulched beds more often than turf grass. Depending on temperature and exposure, usually 1/2 inch water 2 to 3 times per week will usually be adequate for well-established plantings. In the summer, increase run times by about 30%. Unmulched beds need more water, depending on soil type and plants.
- Check to see that soil is moist, not wet, down to about 6-inch depth.
- Be careful not to over water and check for adequate bed drainage. No puddling should remain after watering. Check areas around rain gutter downspouts.
- Newly planted gardens should be monitored daily for the first few weeks and plants with larger root balls may require additional hose-watering at first.

Trees

- Deep watering 1 time per week is recommended for established trees and can be done along with deep watering turf. Let hose trickle around edges of drip line overnight or long enough to wet soil to a depth of 5"– 6". Watch the leaves for signs that soil is holding too much water.
- Newly planted trees should be watered regularly 2-3 times per week through their first summer; water area around edges of root ball.