

## Squeeze every drop

The City of Oklahoma City has partnered with the Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension Service to help promote outdoor water conservation.

For more information about how you can save water outdoors check out these websites:  
[squeezeeverydrop.com](http://squeezeeverydrop.com)  
[thinkwater.okstate.edu](http://thinkwater.okstate.edu)  
[sip.mesonet.org](http://sip.mesonet.org)



The City of  
**OKLAHOMA CITY**  
UTILITIES DEPARTMENT



Oklahoma State University  
Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service

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Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director of Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma. This publication is printed and issued by Oklahoma State University as authorized by the Vice President, Dean, and Director of the Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources and has been prepared and distributed at a cost of \$1.75 per copy.

## Outdoor Water Conservation

### Irrigation



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## Not sure how much to water?

Homeowners often wonder how long they should irrigate their lawns, but the amount of water cannot be measured by time. You can estimate how much water your yard is receiving by following a few simple steps.

1. Gather 9 short, plastic rain gauges or use tuna cans to make your own.

1



2. Place the rain gauges in a grid throughout the irrigated turfgrass areas in the lawn



2

3. Irrigate the lawn for 20 minutes on a relatively non-windy day.

3



4. After irrigating for 20 minutes, combine and measure the amount of water in all of the rain gauges, divide that by 9, then multiply by 3. The answer is the average volume of water in 1 hour.



4

After you've completed this process, you'll have a very good estimate of average irrigation output in inches per hour.

Most lawns only require about one inch of water per week.

## Water Saving Tips

- **Water deeply but infrequently.** Allowing the water to soak into the ground and letting the soil dry out between watering forces plants to produce strong, deep roots.
- **Mulch.** Mulch retains soil moisture, prevents erosion, controls weeds, and increases soil quality.
- **Install a rain sensor.** A rain sensor turns the irrigation system off during and immediately after a rain event
- **Don't water hardscapes.** Make sure sprinklers are watering the lawn and not the street or sidewalks.
- **Avoid heavy pruning.** Pruning stimulates growth and your plants will require more water.
- **Mature plants require less water.** Mature plants and trees have deep root systems and can be watered less frequently.
- **Use a rain gauge.** Typically, lawns require 1 inch of water per week.
- **Take advantage of your downspouts.** Direct the downspout to your garden rather than draining towards the street.
- **Fix or replace broken sprinkler heads.** Take the broken irrigation head with you when you go to buy a new one to ensure you buy the right one.
- **Adjust your irrigation system.** Plants require less water in the fall and winter than in the spring and summer.
- **Check for leaks.** If you have a sudden increase in your water bill, dry or soggy areas in your yard, or overgrown turf areas you might have a leak.

Start at the edge of the perimeter, set one rain gauge down and take 3 steps and place another cup. Repeat until you have a grid.