



How to Water Wisely for a Better Lawn and Cost Savings

(ARA) - On average, nearly a third of the water used by households nationwide goes to maintaining landscapes and lawns. Improving outdoor watering efficiency is one of the easiest ways for homeowners to reduce their overall water usage - and save money.

Whether using an automatic irrigation system or manually moving hose-end sprinklers or handheld hoses, it's important to follow these tips to improve watering efficiency:

- Water early in the morning when temperatures are cooler to minimize evaporation.
- Don't water on windy days.
- Most established lawns and gardens don't need water more than twice a week.
- Utilize a rain gauge to keep track of how much rain or irrigation water a landscape receives.
- Only water a lawn when needed. If you leave footprints when walking across the lawn, it's time to water.
- Make sure sprinkler heads are watering on lawns and gardens - not sidewalks and driveways.

Another way to improve watering efficiency is to install an automatic irrigation system, since it waters more completely and efficiently than handheld hoses.

"Overwatering is a much bigger problem than underwatering," says Tom Kimmell, executive director of The Irrigation Association and a contributor to Project EverGreen, a national alliance of lawn and landscape companies and organizations created to educate and inform consumers

about how to maintain and manage green spaces. "When you see water running off your lawn, money is leaking from your wallet at the same time. An automatic irrigation system is a conservation tool, because it provides balanced water delivery and keeps your yard healthy throughout the year."

Recently, green industry companies and associations such as The Irrigation Association have teamed up to form the non-profit organization Project EverGreen to raise awareness about the environmental, economic and lifestyle benefits of landscapes and promote the significance of those who preserve and enhance green spaces at home, work and play. For more information about Project EverGreen, visit www.projectevergreen.com.

While automatic irrigation systems have many benefits, some key highlights include reduced labor for watering, convenience, full landscape coverage, easy control over irrigation timing for early morning watering, added home value, and minimized plant loss during drought. Automatic systems can also be timed to comply with local watering restrictions.

"Efficient watering prevents waste, lessens the effects of drought and minimizes runoff and leaching," explains Kimmell. "Reducing the amount of water used in our lawns and landscapes is essential to conserving the water supply for everyone."