



April 2010

Landscape Water Conservation and Irrigation Management Tips

While drought in many areas of the U.S. has improved, dry conditions will likely persist in areas such as California, Texas, and Florida. One thing that isn't likely to change anytime soon, however, is the need to cut cost and conserve resources during an economic recession. Conserving water makes sense environmentally, and can help reduce your water utility bill, while still protecting your landscape assets.



It is possible to grow a thriving garden and nurture a landscape while minimizing water consumption and saving money on your water bill. A combination of native-friendly or drought tolerant plants, smart agricultural practices, alternative water sources and efficient irrigation can help keep landscapes and lawns growing healthy throughout dry spells.

Here are some tips for conserving water and saving money by reducing your water bill in your neck of the woods:

Analyze Your Design And Available Space

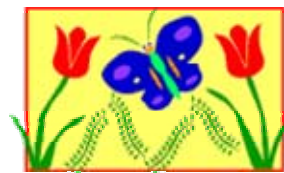
Become familiar with your landscape's microclimates – areas of sun, shade, wind exposure, heat, and cold-as well as its soil type, drainage patterns, slopes, high and low spots, and moisture sources.



The Right Plants

Spring is nature's way of saying, "Let's party!"

~Robin Williams



SPECIAL THANKS

A "SPECIAL THANKS" to our clients below who have utilized OLM's service for the past ten (10) plus years.

Dove Nest
Ft Myers, FL

Embassy Row
Atlanta, GA

Glen Abbey
Atlanta, GA

Johnson & Johnson Corporate
New Brunswick, NJ

McDonald Development
Atlanta, GA

North Park Town Center
Atlanta, GA



Choose drought-resistant or native plants for your landscaping needs. Your options won't be limited to cactus, either. From ornamental grasses to shrub roses, many drought-tolerant and native species also offer flower and foliage color providing visual appeal. Look for plants that thrive in the driest conditions found in your geographic region. Consult your local Cooperative Extension office can help you identify plants that are right for your area. Limit turf areas. A lawn is almost always the single largest user of water in the landscape. Use turf only where it serves a purpose, such as in play or entertainment areas. Choose water efficient grass varieties such to your local climate.

Prepare Your Soil



First, determine your soil texture. The texture of the soil has a direct influence on water retention, drainage, and aeration. Add organic matter or sand to improve soil's water holding or drainage capabilities.

Mulch, Mulch, Mulch!

A thick layer (3 inches) of mulch acts as insulation for your soil and significantly reduces evaporation of soil moisture.

Irrigate Efficiently

Water only as much as is necessary and adjust your irrigation schedule periodically – each week, ideally – to reflect seasonal changes in temperature, wind, humidity, and rainfall. Your irrigation system operating program should be customized to provide only as much water as is needed for each grouping of plants. Established plant material may require little or no supplement watering. Infrequent, deep watering encourages deeper root growth and results in greater tolerance of fluctuations in soil moisture. To further reduce water lost through evaporation, operate your irrigation system during the cooler hours of early morning rather than during the heat of the day or in windy weather. Inspect and evaluate your irrigation system regularly for leaks, broken heads, faulty valves and other malfunctions. Irrigate efficiently with

Partridge Place

Ft Myers, FL

Rivermoore

Atlanta, GA

Sandesin Resort

Destin, FL

Sandestin S.O.A

Destin, FL

Sugarloaf Country Club

Suwanee, GA

The Forest

Ft Myers, FL

The Ridge

Atlanta, GA

Tower Place

Atlanta, GA

Twin Creeks

Allen, TX

Waters Edge

Ft Myers, FL

**When the April wind wakes
the call for the soil, I hold
the plough as my only hold
upon the earth, and, as I
follow through the fresh
and fragrant furrow, I am
planted with every foot-
step, growing, budding,
blooming into a spirit of
spring.** ~Dallas Lore Sharp,
1870-1929



low-volume drip irrigation systems or micro sprinklers which on average uses 80 to 90 percent less water than traditional irrigation systems. Add a rain shut-off device to your sprinkler system. Such a sensor overrides the normally scheduled irrigation, whenever sufficient rain has occurred.

Landscape Irrigation Audit

OLM recommends that you consider having your irrigation system inspected and evaluated by a certified landscape irrigation auditor to determine how your irrigation system can be made to operate more efficiently.

Need help? Have questions?

Contact your OLM representative with questions or comments concerning the information in The Grapevine. As always, we welcome your feedback! Contact OLM by phone, [e-mail](#) or fax and we will be glad to assist!



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