

**F**or a healthy, drought- and stress-tolerant lawn and landscape, **use less water.**



Adopting water-savvy habits also is essential to maintaining and extending your community's water supply, especially during peak use. Water-efficient habits will result in a healthier lawn and landscape, in addition to conserving water and saving money.

With some simple practices and new technology, existing irrigation systems can be made more efficient—lowering your water bill, reducing run-off, and eliminating waste.

**The Irrigation Association® has named July**



**Smart Irrigation Month to provide tips about smart practices and new technology. Learn what you can do to operate your system at peak efficiency throughout the year at [www.smartirrigationmonth.org](http://www.smartirrigationmonth.org).**

To learn more, go to:



[www.epa.gov/watersense](http://www.epa.gov/watersense)



[www.irrigation.org](http://www.irrigation.org)

# Watering *Can* Be Efficient!



**Fine-Tune Your Irrigation System to Save Water and Money**



**R**esidential irrigation systems (e.g., automatic sprinkler systems) offer convenience and control in protecting your landscape investment. Sprinkler systems help you to enjoy your yard, and keep it healthy and beautiful. However, most homeowners tend to overwater their lawns or waste water through inefficient habits. The key to efficient outdoor irrigation is applying just enough water and only when necessary. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Irrigation Association® offer the following water-saving tips to maintain and update automatic irrigation systems:

### Seasons change, so should your system.

Familiarize yourself with the settings on your irrigation controller and adjust the watering schedule regularly to conform with seasonal weather conditions.



### Play “zone” defense.

Schedule each individual zone in your irrigation system to account for the type of sprinkler, sun or shade exposure, and the soil type for the specific area. The same watering schedule rarely applies to all zones in the system.



### Make it a date.

Inspect your irrigation system monthly. Check for leaks, broken or clogged heads, and other problems, or engage an irrigation professional to regularly check your system. Clean micro-irrigation filters as needed.

### Get your head adjusted.

Correct obstructions in sprinkler heads that prevent sprinklers from distributing water evenly. Keep water off pavement and structures.

### Go with a pro.

A professional can perform an irrigation audit and uniformity test to make sure areas are being watered evenly. This can be especially helpful if you have areas being under-watered or brown spots. The Irrigation Association (IA) maintains an online list of IA Certified Landscape Irrigation Auditors.

### Get smart.

Climate or soil moisture sensor-based “smart” controllers evaluate weather or soil moisture conditions, then calculate and automatically adjust the irrigation schedule to meet the specific needs of your landscape.



### Flip to a switch.

Rain shutoff switches, required by law in many states, turn off your system in rainy weather and help compensate for natural rainfall. This inexpensive device can be retrofitted to almost any system.



### Easy does it.

Install low-volume micro-irrigation for gardens, trees, and shrubs. Micro-irrigation includes drip (also known as trickle), micro spray jets, micro-sprinklers, or bubbler irrigation to irrigate slowly and minimize evaporation, runoff, and overspray.

### Watch the clock.

Water when the sun is low or down, winds are calm, and temperatures are cool—between the evening and early morning—to reduce evaporation. You can lose as much as 30 percent of water to evaporation by watering mid-day.



**Less is more.** Saturate root zones and let the soil dry. Watering too much and too frequently results in shallow roots, weed growth, disease, and fungus.