

YOUR GARDEN

Tips On Conserving Water

(NAPSA)—From space, our blue planet seems rich in water. In reality, 97 percent of the planet's water is saltwater, 2 percent is in the form of snow and icebergs and just 1 percent is usable freshwater. Water conservation should be practiced at all times and not just in times of water shortages. Using it more efficiently can start in the yard, and done correctly, it's possible to keep your lawn and garden healthier while using less water. To get the most out of your lawn and garden, the experts at Rain Bird—a leader in the irrigation industry—advise following these tips:

Don't Drown

The greatest waste of water comes from applying too much, too often—much of the water is never absorbed. Instead of watering for one long session, water a few times for shorter periods and take 15-minute breaks in between each session. This will allow water to soak in while minimizing runoff.

Watch The Clock

Water between 5 a.m. and 10 a.m.—when the sun is low, winds are calm and temperatures are cool. Midday watering tends to be less efficient because of water loss due to evaporation and windy conditions during the day. Watering in the evening isn't a good idea either because leaves can remain wet overnight—an open invitation for fungus to grow. By watering in the morning, leaves have a chance to dry out during the day.

Divide By Zones

Different plants need different amounts of water. Divide your yard and landscape areas into separate irrigation zones so that grass can be watered separately from and more frequently than



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ground cover, shrubs and trees. Both sprinkler and drip irrigation can be incorporated to achieve more-efficient use of water.

Water Only Things That Grow

If you have an automatic sprinkler system, make sure the sprinkler heads are adjusted properly to avoid watering sidewalks and driveways. A properly adjusted sprinkler head should spray large droplets of water instead of a fine mist, to minimize evaporation and wind drift.

Consider Dripping

When it comes to watering individual trees, flowerbeds, potted containers or other nongrassy areas, consider applying water directly to the roots using low-volume drip irrigation. This will reduce water waste through evaporation or runoff, and will prevent unwanted weeds from growing.

Let It Rain

Install a shutoff device that automatically detects rain. They are inexpensive and let you take advantage of nature's precious gift without paying for it.

For more watering tips and information on the Intelligent Use of Water, visit the Web site at www.rainbird.com.