



The newsletter of IRWD

pipelines

March 2012 | Number 3

How IRWD Can Help You Save Water Outdoors

Did you know that the average-sized household in the IRWD service area uses about 345 gallons of water per day? And that is not necessarily due to taking showers, washing dishes, flushing toilets, or doing the laundry. If you are an average homeowner, up to 50 to 60 percent of your water is used outdoors for watering your landscape.

One way to determine if you are using too much water is to look at your bill. If it falls within the inefficient, excessive, or wasteful billing tiers, chances are too much water is being used to water your landscape.

There are three ways to reduce the amount of water used on your landscape:

1 Replace grass or install low-water-use plants. Your plant palette dictates water usage. Grass requires much more water compared to native and California-friendly plants. Consider replacing grass areas which are seldom used, like the area next to driveways. To view the many native and California-friendly plants that are suited to our mild winters and warm climate, visit www.alwayswatersmart.com and click on Garden Resources. These plants are low-maintenance and require very little water.

2 Make monthly adjustments to your watering schedule. Automatic irrigation timers are efficient only if the run times are set according to changing weather and climate conditions. Go to www.alwayswatersmart.com and click on Irrigation Schedule for suggested irrigation times.

3 Maintain an efficient irrigation system. If your sprinklers are watering the driveway, sidewalk, or the street, water is being wasted and causing runoff. Fix leaks, adjust spray patterns and install efficient rotating nozzles and drip irrigation where possible.

Visit www.alwayswatersmart.com to take advantage of the many ways you can reduce your outdoor water use and save money.

IRWD offers the following incentives to help you become more water efficient outdoors:

- Take advantage of our **Turf Removal Rebate Program**, which pays \$1.50 per square-foot of grass for a minimum of 250 to a maximum of 10,000 square-feet of grass removed. For details, visit www.alwayswatersmart.com and click on Turf Removal Rebate.
- Replace your old water-wasting sprinklers with the **Free High Efficiency Sprinkler Nozzles** that will be available from March 1 through April 30. See page 2 for details or visit www.freesprinklernozzles.com.
- Get a rebate to **upgrade your old sprinkler timer** to a new state-of-the-art weather-based irrigation controller. Customers may receive a rebate of up to \$425 per controller. Go to www.alwayswatersmart.com and click on Rebates for full details. All rebate amounts may fluctuate and are subject to funding availability.

Customer Care ~ Question of the Month

Q: Can I still sign up for an Always Water Smart Resident Tour ?

A: Yes, tour dates are still open, but reservations are filling fast! Remaining tour dates are: Friday, April 20 and April 27, and Saturday, May 5 and May 19. To Sign up, go to www.irwd.com and click on Community Programs and Tours.



Take Control of Your Controller ~ Step 1

It is important to maintain your irrigation system to avoid over-watering, maintain plant health, and reduce runoff. IRWD wants to team up with you to take control of your irrigation controller.

Step 1:

- Be sure your controller has a back-up battery in case of a power outage and replace it every time you replace your fire alarm batteries. Most controllers take a 9 volt battery, which is located behind or under the controller face.

- Check your controller's run times; if they're set to water seven days a week, 10 minutes for each zone this means you have experienced a power outage and your controller's back-up battery is dead or missing.

- Now it's time to re-schedule your run times. Visit www.alwayswatersmart.com, and click on Irrigation Schedule or refer to the schedule below.

- Be sure to check out **Step 2** in next month's *Pipelines*.



This controller has just been scheduled to water for three minutes, three days per week.

Customer Service Information

IRWD Website Link & Social Media Channels »

24 Hour Customer Service


(949) 453-5300

email: customerservice@irwd.com

Irvine Ranch Water District

15600 Sand Canyon Avenue
Irvine, California 92618

Visit us: www.irwd.com

 Join our fan page:
Irvine Ranch Water District

 @IRWDnews
@AlwaysH2OSmart
@IRWDemergency

 View our YouTube channel:
www.youtube.com/IrvineRanchWD



The mission of Irvine Ranch Water District, a public agency, is to provide reliable, high quality water and sewer service in an efficient, cost effective manner and environmentally sensitive way that provides a high level of customer satisfaction.

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IRWD Pipelines Newsletter

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Comments about this publication?
email: info@irwd.com

Free Sprinkler Nozzles Available Now

Here's a quick, easy and, best of all, FREE way to make your sprinklers more efficient, use less water and reduce runoff. Residential* customers can sign up for our **Free Sprinkler Nozzle Program**, March 1 through April 30, and get up to 25 free TORO Precision Series Spray Nozzles, a \$100 value.



These nozzles distribute the water from your sprinklers more evenly allowing you to use less water and keep your landscape looking great. Because they deliver water at a much lower rate they allow water to soak into the soil instead of running off into the gutters. Replacing your current nozzles with TORO Precision Series Spray Nozzles is as easy as replacing the cap on a water bottle. Just screw off the old nozzle and screw on the new one. No digging, no pipe cutting and no gluing. For more information and to sign up for your free nozzles, go to www.freesprinklernozzles.com and start saving water! (*Non-residential customers visit www.freesprinklernozzles.com for details.)

Suggested Weekly Spring Irrigation Schedule

Month	Turfgrass	Trees, Shrubs & Ground Cover	% Option ²
March	3 days, 2 cycles ¹ of 3 minutes each	2 days, 2 cycles of 3 minutes each	50%
April	3 days, 2 cycles of 4 minutes each	2 days, 2 cycles of 4 minutes each	70%
May	3 days, 3 cycles of 3 minutes each	2 days, 3 cycles of 3 minutes each	80%

The above chart suggests a weekly schedule for spray-head irrigation, assuming heavy clay soils common to most local coastal and foothill areas. Generally, these are the MAXIMUM times you will need for full sun areas. Your landscape's particular watering times may vary. Start with this schedule and increase the times only if your plants show signs of stress. If stress occurs only in isolated areas, check your irrigation system before increasing the watering time.

¹ By "cycling" the irrigation controller to turn on for the recommended number of minutes an hour apart, deeper watering and healthier root growth are gained, while runoff is reduced.

² The % option, either a button or a dial, permits the watering run times for all electric valves managed by a controller to be increased or decreased with just one adjustment by percentage.