



WATERING GUIDE

Watering your new landscape plantings is the most important thing you will do to aid their establishment and development. As the installer and warranty provider of your new landscaping we would love to offer you a concise and easy to follow rule to watering your plants. However, there is no hard and fast rule when it comes to how often or how much water your new plantings will need.

A watering guide follows that general concludes that when it comes to “how often” the answer is that ***watering should occur when the soil surrounding the newly installed plant’s root ball is dry***. Knowing if the soil is dry requires checking soil moisture levels. With out expensive soil probes, checking moisture levels is not always quick or convenient, so consider these key points in regard to “how much” water is needed before jumping into the watering guide:

- ***your new plantings will need at least 1 inch of water per week***
- ***the rain we get is rarely enough (in our area May is the only month in which the rainfall average meets the minimum 1 inch a week of needed water)***



WHEN TO WATER...

Checking Soil Moisture

Determine soil moisture levels at 6-10 inches by using a soil probe or by digging up a test sample with a hand trowel and checking the moisture content with the squeeze test. Try to ball the soil removed from along side of the plants’ root ball with a squeeze of your hands. If it holds together the moisture is adequate. If it does not stick together or crumbles apart easily watering is needed. Remember to water enough to moisten all of the soil surrounding the root ball.

Drooping Leaves

Typically drooping leaves will indicated a need for water and thus it may be an easy to identify indicator of your plants needs. However, you must still check the soil moisture level as leaves starved for oxygen due to overwatering will also droop.

HOW MUCH TO WATER...

Moisten Without Causing Puddling and Squishy Soil

The soil surrounding the root ball of your new plants should be thoroughly moistened when you water but then should be allowed to dry prior to successive waterings. If water is puddling in the areas you are watering you may be applying the water at a rate faster than absorption is taking place or you have already saturated the ground. Do not water too frequently or over water as the squishy soil that results can lead to root rot, a wide range of fungal diseases, foliar issues, and leaching of nutrients needed for overall plant health.



Seasonal Adjustments

As common sense would suggest, plants will need more water in hot and dry months than they will in the cooler, rainy spring and fall months. In summer dry spells watering three or four times a week is not out of the question; other times of the year twice a week may be more than adequate.

HOW TO REDUCE THE WATER NEEDED...

Proper Application

Watering in proper amounts (or not over watering) and with proper timing (or after allowing the soil to dry out before watering again) will greatly reduce the amount of water needed to adequately water your plants as discussed above. However, watering only the plants and planting bed areas that actually need water is of greater importance. With this in mind, setting a hose end sprinkler in the yard to cover your new plantings may not be the best approach. Sprinklers may require the least amount of your time, but they usually water more than your target area as they do not account for your unique bed shapes and they distribute the same amount of water to all plants regardless of plant size or water needs. We recommend, when time allows, watering by hand. Hand watering with a hose end nozzle that has a shower head like effect will ensure that the water is delivered directly to the root system with great control over the quantity given to each plant. Only a professionally design and installed irrigation system can beat the efficiency of hand watering; we can offer a quote if you are interested. Watering in the morning is preferred to watering during the day or at night. However, much like hose sprinkler watering versus hand watering, it is better to water employing the less preferred method than not at all.



Mulching

A blanket of fresh mulch looks great and helps the soil hold moisture by regulating temperature and slowing evaporation. While mulch is great because it can reduce the amount of water needed, it can also give false impressions about the soil moisture levels beneath. It is best to pull back the mulch and check the soil directly, as often times the mulch may appear to be wet but the soil is dry beneath, and vice versa.

