

YARD STICK ISSUE 4, April, 2022

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Odd/Even Watering: Best Way to Water Your Lawn A New Approach for 2022 in Tellico Village

Over watering our lawns is harmful to the grass and potentially the lake. The best management practices (BMPs) for watering lawns that are supported by research from the UT's Agricultural Extension Service are: 1. Water deeply; 2. Water your lawn twice a week. If your **home address number is odd**, water on **Tuesday, Thursday, or Saturday**. If your **home address number is even**, water on **Monday, Wednesday, or Friday**. 3. Water between 3 - 9 a.m. 4. Turn off your automatic sprinkler system if it rains one inch (1") or more per week. These four basic watering BMPs are meant to keep your lawn healthy, the lake free of excess chemicals that promote the growth of algae and unwanted vegetation, help balance water pressure in the Village and keep money in your pocket.

Watering **deeply** means soaking the soil 4" – 6" inches deep. This practice promotes deep rooting of lawn grasses which reduces root burning from direct sunlight and preserves the root system when extended droughts occur. Avoid light, frequent watering because it will cause a shallow root system to form and your lawn will suffer from the burning sun and periods of drought.

How does a homeowner determine the length of time it takes for his/her watering system to achieve a deep watering? An established lawn requires 1" to 1 ½" inches of water per week including rainfall or ½" to ¾" per irrigation period for two (2) periods per week. Place three (3) 4"- 6" inch deep cans in one of your watering zones. Water your lawn until the water in the can reaches the desired level. Average the volume of water accumulated in the three (3) cans. The amount of time you need to achieve a deep watering goal is now known. Per your house number, set your timer to water 2 days per week on odd or even days. But, if rainfall is equal to or exceeds 1" inch per week, turn your timer off, save money and let "Mother Nature" water your lawn for free.

After each deep watering, let the lawn thoroughly dry out. Watering between 3 - 9 a.m. is ideal. **First**, in the early morning the wind is most calm. Strong day time breezes blow the water about and distribute it unevenly. **Second**, you limit the amount of time droplets are exposed to the sun. This reduces the amount of water loss from evaporation. **Third**, watering earlier than 3 a.m. will leave water on the blades too long and can cause the growth of fungus.

Low water pressure is a concern to many and is caused when most homeowners water lawns on **Monday, Wednesday and Friday** in the early morning. Simultaneous neighborhood demand for water puts enormous strain on the water supply system. An easy no-cost way to resolve this problem and maintain stable water pressure is for residents to water from 3 - 9 a.m. 2 days a week on odd/even days. The result is a “balancing” effect on neighborhood water pressure. And, the amount of water available for showers and laundry later in the morning is increased. The odd/even watering pattern has been adopted by many communities throughout the United States whether they live in a water rich area like ours or in a drought prone region. It is time to realize that if this didn’t make financial and management sense, people wouldn’t do it. **Let’s implement the program in our neighborhoods NOW.**

Watering BMPs may require you to work with your irrigation service technician who may not fully understand BMPs for your lawn. Talk to your service provider technician when they set up your watering timer to establish a deep watering program per your house number on odd or even days. Or, for best results, do it yourself!

In summary, the four (4) watering BMPs to effectively do the following: keep money in your pocket, sustain a healthy lawn, keep phosphorous and nitrogen out of the lake which decreases the risk for algae and unwanted vegetation, and balances water demands that decrease the risk for low water pressure for all residents.