



**W**aterSense® is a partnership program sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Its mission is to protect the future of our nation's water supply by promoting and enhancing the market for water-efficient products and services. WaterSense is partnering with professional certifying organizations and certified landscape irrigation professionals to bring efficient watering techniques and products to lawns and gardens across the country.

**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).**

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# Watering *Can* Be Efficient!

Fine-Tune Your Irrigation System to Save Water and Money



  
EPA  
WaterSense



**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.

**Reduce demand.** Use native plants in your landscape—they require less care and water than ornamental varieties—and apply mulch around shrubs and garden plants to reduce evaporation.

**Less is more.** If you step on your lawn and the grass springs back, it does not need to be watered. Watering plants too much and too frequently results in shallow roots, weed growth, disease, and fungus.

**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.

### Check for WaterSense!

A certified irrigation professional can design, install, maintain, or audit your system to ensure optimal efficiency using the proper amount of water to maintain a healthy landscape. Ask if your irrigation contractor is a WaterSense partner, which means he or she has been certified through a program that focuses on water efficiency.



**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 midday.