Seasonal Watering

HOW MUCH DO I NEED TO WATER? THAT'S A GOOD QUESTION!

The chart below was developed by the irrigation auditors with the Dallas Water Utilities Conservation Division in an effort to assist customers with the programming of their controllers. Landscape irrigation should be considered as the replacement of water that has been lost to evaporation and that has been used by the plant material in your yard. The amount of water required to meet the needs of your yard changes with the type of plant material and with the weather. Since "warm season turf" is the most common plant material in this area, it will be used as the basis for irrigation watering.

The water requirement for turf is based on a scientific measure of a plant's water demand for maximum production, based on weather conditions. This requirement is then adjusted for the particular type of plant, which in this case is warm season turf. To calculate the local water requirement, 26 years of historical data for the Dallas area, provided by Texas A&M AgriLife Research, was used. However, this amount of water is seldom applied to lawns, unless the goal is to maximize the production of grass clippings. Instead the goal is to water for allowable stress, or to use as little water as possible to maintain a healthy, attractive turf. To help quantify allowable stress, a range of "normal stress" (just enough water to stay healthy) to "no stress" (all the water the turf could use) is utilized.

The sprinkler run times are calculated using the manufacturer's specifications for the three most common types of irrigation equipment. Different types of heads have different precipitation rates, meaning they apply water at different rates. The range of run times on the chart below is due to the different precipitation rates and is calculated per week for each section.

Many modern automatic sprinkler controllers have a "season adjust" or "water budget" feature. Included in the chart below is the percent of change to help you with the monthly programming necessary for maximum water conservation. Since July has the highest water requirement, it is used in this chart as the base month for all seasonal adjustments.

The more you are willing to "stress" your turf, by lowering your run times, the more water/money you will save. The ultimate decision on run times is up to you as the property owner.

Month	Type of Head	Run Time Mins./Week Norm Stress	No Stress	Average Mins./Week	Seasonal Adjust
January	Rotor	0	0	0	
	Rotary Spray	0	0	0	0%
	Fixed Spray	0	0	0	
February	Rotor	9	14	11	
	Rotary Spray	6	9	8	6%
	Fixed Spray	2	4	3	
March	Rotor	41	69	55	
	Rotary Spray	27	45	36	27%
	Fixed Spray	10	17	14	
April	Rotor	108	179	143	
	Rotary Spray	71	118	94	69%
	Fixed Spray	27	45	36	
May	Rotor	130	217	173	
	Rotary Spray	85	142	114	84%
	Fixed Spray	32	54	43	
June	Rotor	148	246	197	
	Rotary Spray	97	161	129	95%
	Fixed Spray	37	62	49	
July	Rotor	155	258	207	
	Rotary Spray	102	169	135	100%
	Fixed Spray	39	65	52	
August	Rotor	152	253	202	
	Rotary Spray	100	166	133	98%
	Fixed Spray	38	63	51	
September	Rotor	115	192	153	
	Rotary Spray	75	126	100	74%
	Fixed Spray	29	48	38	
October	Rotor	44	73	58	
	Rotary Spray	29	48	38	28%
	Fixed Spray	11	18	15	
November	Rotor	9	15	12	
	Rotary Spray	6	10	8	6%
	Fixed Spray	2	4	3	
December	Rotor	0	0	0	
	Rotary Spray	0	0	0	0%
	Fixed Spray	0	0	0	