

Watering Guidelines

One of the most frequently asked questions is "How often do I water this?" There are many factors which will determine the amount of water needed to help your lawn and plants thrive. Most all of the lawns and plants grown in our area require at least 1 inch of water per week in the warm season. If your rain-gauge doesn't show it, you will need to supplement water which could be one hour with a sprinkler or irrigation system on for one hour, one day a week depending on water pressure. When it feels "spongy" under your feet, you have watered your lawn enough. A "tuna can" can replace a rain gauge to measure an inch of water with the sprinkler or irrigation system. During the cooler months of the year, watering needs may be less but still require monitoring.

More plants are lost and more lawn diseases occur in landscapes which are over-watered. A plant can have the same un-healthy appearance like wilted leaves, discoloration, and leaf-loss from being over-watered as well as under-watered. An easy way to determine if your plants need water is this: if it is looking "wilted" and you water thoroughly, by the next day it should perk up. If it doesn't then chances are it is too wet. Examine how it it's planted, if it is newly planted make sure the root ball hasn't settled down below grade and is still raised. Check for excessive dirt and/or mulch on the top of the root ball, a light layer of soil conditioner or mulch should be the only cover on the top of the ball.

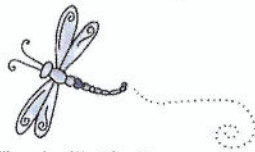
Finally, check the soil with a trowel, soil probe, or finger to measure the moisture. You can always stop by with questions and a soil sample because watering is an "Art" as well as a science.

A note about irrigation systems... if you have one, great! Ask us about recommended settings for optimum performance. If you don't have one, that's okay too. We believe you do not always need one to be a successful gardener here. Either way, we recommend and prefer hand-watering for establishing new plantings.

Fertilization Guidelines

To ensure the best outcome, all plants should be fertilized with Bio-Tone by Espoma when planted. The mycorrhizae and other micro-nutrients it contains will help establish bigger, healthier root balls faster.

The best times to feed your landscape is three times. Two times during the "growing" season, early spring to late spring, and once in early fall. Annuals and perennials require additional phosphate for abundant roots and blooms. We carry a wide range of organic and nutrient-based fertilizers. Ask us for recommendations.



Planting Guidelines

Location, location, location... When choosing a location for your new plant consider the mature size, its sun/shade preferences and moisture requirements. A good rule of thumb is sunny mornings and afternoon shade are for "shade-lovers" and anything in the sun from noon on would be a "sun-loving" plant. We can help you select the right plant for the right location.

When moving your plants around the yard, carry them by the "ball" if they are balled and burlapped (B&B), or by the pot, as pulling by the trunk or top of plant can damage the roots. If it's going to be a few days before you can plant, water thoroughly and place the plants where they are protected from excessive sun/wind as this will cause them to dry out quicker. They should be checked daily as moisture requirements vary depending on weather and size of plant.

Dig the hole for your plant twice the width but no deeper than the size of the root ball. Set aside a third of the existing soil and mix in equal parts composted cow manure and pine bark soil conditioner, and the adequate amount of Bio-Tone starter fertilizer. Place some in the bottom of the hole before positioning your plant so when you do the top 1/4 of the root ball is above ground level. Before placing the plant in hole, loosen the roots of potted plants by cutting off the bottom 1" and making 3-4 slits in the sides. If the plant is B&B, leave the wire and burlap in place. After you have dropped it in the hole, backfill with rest of mixture, lightly tamping as you go.

PLANTING INSTRUCTIONS DIAGRAM

If it is B&B, cut strings from around the trunk and peel back the burlap from the top of the root ball like a package. Water it well and check back with it every day or so to determine if it needs water again.

The bigger the root ball, the less watering you have to do. With the remaining soil create a "ring" around the root ball and cover with soil conditioner or lightly mulch.

