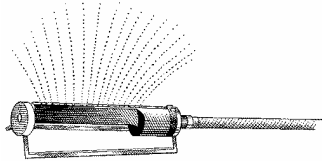


Tips for Gardening in Dry Weather

July 2006

Community Gardeners. During these hot, dry days, we all need to be extra careful in our water use. We can use water wisely in our gardens, getting the most out of every drop!

Be wise in your use of our garden's water!



Watering Tips

- Water efficiently. When irrigating with a sprinkler, early morning is the best time to water. A morning application allows the water to soak deeply into the ground with little water lost to evaporation. When watering is completed, the plant foliage dries quickly. Watering at midday is less efficient because evaporation is rapid and strong winds may cause uneven water distribution. Strong midday winds may also carry water onto non planted areas, wasting considerable amounts of water. Watering gardens with a sprinkler in the evening or during the night may increase disease problems.
- Water deeply and infrequently. Deep watering promotes the development of a deep, extensive root system. Frequent, light watering promotes shallow rooting. Deep-rooted plants will be able to survive hot, dry weather much better than shallow-rooted plants because they will be able to reach the moisture deep in the soil.
- A deep watering once a week should be adequate for fruit, vegetable, and flower gardens. Apply approximately 1 inch of water per week. When watering gardens and landscape plantings, soil characteristics and weather conditions actually determine the amount and frequency of watering. For example, sandy soils require more frequent watering than loam soils.
- Water uniformly. Uniform application of water prevents waste and produces even growth.
- In the fruit and vegetable garden, drip irrigation systems and soaker hoses are generally **more efficient** and cause fewer disease problems than sprinklers. Mornings and evenings are excellent times to water gardens when using a drip irrigation system or soaker hose.
- Mulch garden areas to conserve soil moisture. Mulching reduces the rate of evaporation from the soil surface and also limits weed competition. Organic materials, such as grass clippings, straw, and shredded leaves are excellent mulches for the vegetable garden. Wood chips, bark, and ground corncobs are good choices for perennial beds and trees and shrubs.

- modified from Iowa State University, Department of Horticulture

Weeding Tip

Keep your garden weeded. Weeds use up soil moisture. Don't let them use our water!

Gardeners - Drink Fluids and Watch for Overheating



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~ Promoting and Preserving Community Gardening across the Twin Cities ~