



DEER CREEK
WATER ASSOCIATION

HOW MUCH WATER IS YOUR SPRINKLER USING?

Water usage is one of the most variable expenses for a homeowner. When we shower, flush the toilet, run the dishwasher, or do laundry, we have a pretty good idea of how much water was used for those purposes.

However when water gets used outside, particularly in the form of yard and garden irrigation systems, it's hard to know how much volume of water was used.

Making matters worse, Deer Creek doesn't send the bill until 15 days after the meter has been read, and Deer Creek only bills for water usage every 60 days. Who can remember how much water was put on the lawn 75 days ago? Or how often the sprinklers were run, depending on how hot the weather was?

Save Money and Frustration Before The Summer Irrigation Season by Checking Usage Now

When your water bill arrives during summer, it can come as a shock to see how much water you were billed for... given that the billing rate increases dramatically when water usage exceeds the allotment. The culprit? Almost always irrigation.

The goal of this flyer is to help you understand and calculate how much water your irrigation system uses, so you can have more control over the water volume (and resulting cost).

Here's How to Calculate Your Water Usage:

Deer Creek's water meters measure volume in cubic feet. Every time the red pointer makes a complete circle around your meter register, that indicates one cubic foot of water has been used—which equals 7.50 gallons of water.

4. Subtract the beginning meter number from the ending number, then multiply this difference times 7.50. The resulting number equals the gallons of water used to run all of the sprinkler zones... **during each use.**

Ending Meter Number: _____
Less Beginning Number: - _____
Difference: = _____
x 7.50 = _____
Gallons used in EACH irrigation cycle

Every DCWA member is allotted about 650 gallons of water per day. This equals roughly 5,000 cubic feet, or about 39,000 gallons of water during a 60-day billing period. **When water usage exceeds the allotment, the rate for water used increases dramatically.**

For customers who have purchased and installed their own electronic readers in their meter boxes to measure the flow of water going through the meter, be sure you verify the usage of **both** the meter **and** the electronic reader when you are using the above calculation to check your sprinkler volume.

Give this flyer to your sprinkler professional, and see the back side for tips on how to save on lawn and garden water usage



Need help finding your meter?
Give us a call at 360-820-4314.

6 Easy Steps for More Healthy, Water-Efficient Landscaping

Nothing beats a beautiful yard in summer. These simple steps will help you save money, protect the health of your family and pets (not to mention our local salmon and environment), and improve the health of your yard:

1. Mow Differently

Cut your grass higher than normal—roughly 1 to 2 inches—cut it more regularly, and leave the clippings on the grass. Don't worry... this won't cause thatch to build up. It makes lawns healthier with more soil organisms and free fertilizer.



2. Fertilize Differently

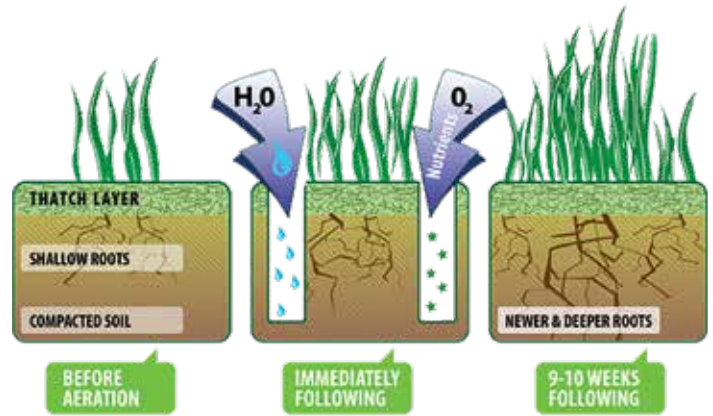


Grass in our area is not deep blue-green by nature, it's a lighter meadow green. Choose organic, slow-release fertilizers, and wait until September to fertilize (if you need to do it sooner, choose June... when grass growth starts to slow down).

3. Water Differently

Let the soil dry out between waterings to prevent lawn disease and save water. **Lawns only need roughly 1 inch of water per week in summer to stay green.** How much is 1 inch? Put an empty tuna can on your grass, turn on the sprinkler, and check the time. When the tuna can has filled with 1 inch of water, note the time. That's how long to water your yard each week.

For those of you using an irrigation system, be sure to turn off your system when it rains, or install an automatic rain shutoff device, and/or a WaterSense-labeled timer that adjusts your runtimes according to the weather. Add a reminder to your calendar to inspect your system every month for leaks.



4. Maintain Differently

Aerate in spring or fall to improve root development and water penetration, then **overseed** with Northwest-adapted grass seed, followed by a top dressing of 1/4 to 1/2 inch of **compost** to cover the seed and improve the soil.

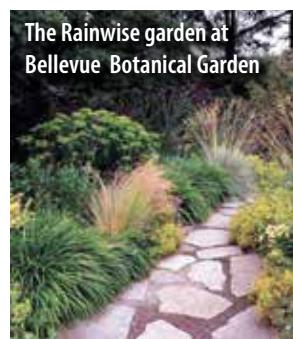
5. Think Differently

Avoid “weed and feed,” RoundUp, and other lawn chemicals. Everything you put in your yard eventually winds up in our local streams, lakes, and Puget Sound. Steps 1 through 4 will promote a healthier lawn that crowds out weeds. Choose organic fertilizers, and use a long-handled weed puller to easily remove dandelions right after you've watered.



6. Plant Differently

Grass is fussy: it doesn't like to grow in all areas, and takes a lot of work to maintain.



Consider adding pathways, vegetable beds, flower beds, and native vegetation more suited to the different zones in your yard (dry, moist, sunny, shady). This also provides more food and cover for birds, butterflies, and bees.



If you want to keep some grass, choose grass species labeled by the Turfgrass Water Conservation Alliance for a green, healthy yard with less watering.