A Maintenance Checklist for a Water-Efficient Landscape

☐ Check and clean/repair irrigation distribution components monthly
☐ Set the controller according to season
☐ Check the functioning of the rain shutoff device quarterly during dry season and monthly during the rainy season
☐ Check micro-irrigation filter quarterly
☐ Prune plants and grass around sprinkler heads or raise them to minimize interference with irrigation spray coverage
☐ Replenish organic mulch at least annually
☐ Calibrate irrigation zones yearly

For additional landscape water conservation information:
• Call the County Extension Service at 316-1000. Visit the Web site at http://sarasota.extension.ufl.edu
• Visit the Florida House Learning Center demonstration landscape on the campus of the Sarasota County Technical Institute at Benvea and Proctor Roads in Sarasota or call 316-1200.
• Additional water conservation information is available from Sarasota County Environmental Services at 378-6859. Visit the Web site at www.SCESonline.org

Landscape Water Conservation Calendar

Water conservation is a year-round job. We need to conserve during the summer rainy and cool winter times of the year in order to make more water available during hot dry periods.

The suggestions below are arranged by the month to help consumers form good conservation habits. All actions need to comply with water restrictions.

January
- Temperatures are cool and plant growth is limited. Irrigation controllers should be set for a watering frequency of once every 7 to 14 days, depending on actual temperatures and water restriction schedules.
- Clean and repair irrigation components.
- Add mulch to landscapes if not done in December.

February
- Set irrigation frequency to once a week.
- Add compost when renovating garden beds.
- Convert to micro-irrigation for tree/shrub beds. Try starter kits from retailers.
- Renovate irrigation systems to establish separate zones for turf and annual flowers from trees and shrubs.
- Add/replenish mulch if not done in December or January.
- Use slow release fertilizers to reduce flushes of growth that stimulate plant water demands.

March
- Keep irrigation frequency to once per week.
- Check rain shut-off device to make sure it is functioning.
- Calibrate irrigation zones using flat-bottomed cans so that 1/2 to 3/4 inch of water is delivered per application.
- Flush micro-irrigation systems and clean the filter.
- Check spray emitters to make sure the water pattern overlaps.

April
- Watering frequency should be based on plant needs.
- Consider enlarging mulched areas and reducing turf areas. Plant more trees.
- Install/expand “hardscape” - walkways, patios, decks.
- Plant drought-tolerant plants.
- See if you can capture air conditioning condensation water and divert it to your landscape.
- Check and repair irrigation problems.

May
- Use slow release fertilizers to reduce flushes of growth that stimulate plant water demand.
- Water in early morning when plants wilt the night before.
- When planting plants, group them together according to their water requirements.
- Check and repair any irrigation system deficiencies.

June
- Make sure the rain shut-off device is functioning.
- With the onset of the rainy season, adjust irrigation frequency based on rainfall received.
- Consider rain barrels to capture water off roofs.
- Check and clean irrigation filter.
- Correct irrigation problems.

July
- Turn off irrigation emitters to planted areas that do not need water due to the rainy season.
- Permanently disconnect irrigation to drought tolerant and native plants that are established and do not require supplemental irrigation.
- Make sure downsputs are directed into landscaped areas and not driveways.
- Check the rain shut-off device.

August
- Make sure your irrigation system is adjusted to account for rainfall.
- Check the rain shut-off device.
- Check irrigation system for leaks and malfunctions.

September
- Irrigate only according to plant needs.
- Plan landscape modifications for coming cooler dryer months to save more water.
- Check and clean irrigation filter.
- Use slow release fertilizers to reduce flushes of growth that stimulate plant water demands.

October
- Adjust irrigation time clocks to make sure frequency is not more than once per week.
- Consider replacing some turf areas with drought-tolerant ground cover.
- Replenish mulch. Expand mulch areas.
- Plant drought tolerant plants.
- Correct irrigation problems.

November
- Make sure irrigation system is functioning properly.
- Convert tree-shrub beds to micro-irrigation and put them on separate zones from turfgrass.
- Plant more trees for canopy coverage.
- Check the rain shut-off device.

December
- Check and clean irrigation filter.
- Set irrigation frequency to once every 7 to 14 days.
- Replenish mulch.
- Troubleshoot entire irrigation system and clean, adjust or replace malfunctioning components.
- Buy a spouse a micro-irrigation starter kit, drought tolerant plants, and a new rain shut-off device as gifts and make sure they are installed.