



## Landscaping Techniques to Reduce Water Use

- Plan your turf areas. Limit lawns to areas that will be used to accent plantings or provide a play area.
- Choose plants that are native to your area and do well with being watered by rainfall.
- Mulch planting beds. This will help the soil retain water longer.
- Organize your planting areas so plants that have similar watering needs are near each other.
- Don't over fertilize.
- Have your lawn aerated every couple of years.
- Amend your soil if needed.



## Your Irrigation System: Tips to Water Wisely

### Are You Wasting Half of Your Irrigation Water?

**Fact:** *About half of the water used by irrigation systems is wasted due to evaporation, runoff or over watering.*

The Water Purveyors Association of Kitsap (WaterPAK) began in 1993 and is an association of the water purveyors and other related agencies in Kitsap County.

For more information, please visit:  
[www.waterpak.org](http://www.waterpak.org)





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## Is Your Irrigation System Working Efficiently?

Automatic Irrigation systems are convenient but can be expensive. They double the water used by residential water customers during May through September. This means that using an automatic irrigation system will result in a higher water bill. About half of the water used by irrigation systems is wasted due to evaporation, runoff or over watering.

It is possible to reign in excessive water use and high water bills while enjoying a green, inviting landscape. Wise landscape planning and proper use of your irrigation system will lower water consumption and water bills.

Read your irrigation system manual to learn how to most efficiently use your system controller. Discuss proper irrigation schedules with your landscaper or gardener. Adjust watering schedules in accordance with water needs. Water in early morning to prevent evaporation. Drip systems may be the best choice for plantings and shrubs. Proper routine maintenance of irrigation systems is essential to get every drop of irrigation water to where it is needed.

## Know Your Irrigation Controller

You can save water and money by using four features offered on most automatic irrigation controllers.

- **Rain Sensors** are a must for any irrigation system. They prevent watering during rain events. Many times this device must be purchased separately and installed.
- **Multiple Program** features save water because they allow different watering schedules for separate areas or zones of the landscape. For example, shrubs take 30% less water than lawns. Schedule each zone according to the type of plants and soil types found there.
- **Cycle Soak** features allow multiple starts of the system so that irrigation water has time to soak into the ground instead of being wasted by running off of slopes. Decide how long to run your system then divide that time by the number of cycles you want.
- **Seasonal Adjust** buttons allow you to change your watering times with the weather. If your watering schedule is set for the hottest time of year, this becomes 100%. Change this percent setting at least monthly. Early and later in the season, this setting can be decreased to 50% or less.



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## Maintenance

Efficient irrigation systems require continued maintenance to reduce costs, run-off and water loss. Inspect and repair your irrigation system regularly.

- Misaligned sprinkler heads can cause over spray onto pavement. Water plants not sidewalks.
- Improperly regulated pressure in irrigation systems waste water. Installing a pressure regulator will alleviate this problem.
- Broken Sprinkler heads fail to irrigate the full area. Replace old or broken heads.
- Sunken heads that are positioned too low won't reach far enough and will saturate areas close to the sprinkler heads.

Determining how much water lawns and gardens need depends on soil type, plant type and slope. The rule of thumb is one inch per week for lawns and vegetable gardens. Shrubs take much less-many grow well without extra water. Water only when lawns and gardens need it.

