WATER-WISE LAWN CARE

Each year, lawn watering accounts for nearly half the water used by most homes. Unfortunately, many residents water too often and leave the sprinklers on too long. The goal of lawn watering should be to apply the minimum required for the lawn to maintain health, vigor and an acceptable appearance. Overwatering by just a 1/4" may result in thousands of gallons of wasted water.

How Much Should I Water My Lawn?

Use the following chart as a general guideline for watering a bluegrass lawn. Be sure to subtract any rainfall from these amounts. Your lawn probably needs less water than you think. If you have an automatic sprinkler system, consider resetting the watering schedule at least once a month. Also, look for the daily Lawn Watering information listed with the weather in the *Fort Collins Coloradoan*.

High temperature (°F)	Inches to water per week
70s	1"
80s	1-1/2"
90s	2"

Steps to Measure Sprinkler Output

Follow these steps, just once, and you will know how much water your sprinkler puts out. For example, if your sprinkler delivers 2 inches of water per hour, and your lawn needs 1 inch, then you need to run your sprinkler for 30 minutes that day.

1. Set out 3 or 4 identical cans within the sprinkler's spray and run it for 15 minutes.

2. Turn off the sprinkler and pour the water from the cans into one can.

3. With a ruler, measure the depth of water in the can. Divide by the number of cans.

4. Multiply by 4 to find the amount of water the sprinkler puts out in one hour.

Watering Tips

● Water late in the evening or early in the morning for greatest benefit to the lawn.

● Water when your lawn shows the need. Changes of color or footprints remaining for a long time are indicators of a thirsty lawn.

● Aerate once a year to help water penetrate into the clay soils typical to our area.

● Use a kitchen timer as a reminder to turn sprinklers off, or purchase an automatic shutoff timer to mount to the hose bib.

● For more water-conserving tips, call Fort Collins Utilities at 221-6877.