

BE YOUR OWN LAWN CARE EXPERT:

FIRST STEP: Gather Information

WHAT IS LAWN MAINTENANCE?

Lawn maintenance should be considered as a whole: There is a mutual influence of watering, fertilizing, and mowing. If you consider this, you can save water, effort, and money AND still have a good looking lawn!

KNOW YOUR YARD

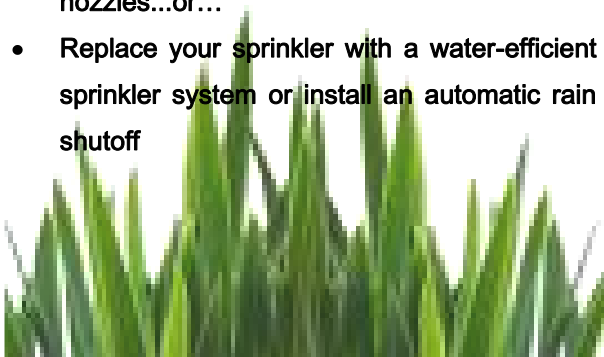
- Have your soil tested
- Know your lawn type and it's specific needs

SECOND

STEP: Start being efficient...

REDUCE WATER LOSS

- Deep-soaking and drip irrigation
- Water early in the morning
- Water when the sun is down
- Don't water on windy days
- Check your sprinkler for leaks or misdirected nozzles...or...
- Replace your sprinkler with a water-efficient sprinkler system or install an automatic rain shutoff



EFFICIENT WATERING

1. TIMING

- **Only water when the plants need it:** If you leave footprints on the grass, it is usually time to water.
- **Don't water when rain is in the forecast.**
- **After a rain-shower, skip watering** until the grass dries and you leave footprints.



2. FREQUENCY

- **Test your soil:** Water only when a probe or screwdriver is difficult to push into the ground or shows that the soil is dry 4 to 6 inches down.
- **Depends on the season:** Your lawn needs a lot less water in the spring and fall than it does in July or August.
- **Depends on your lawn type:** **Cool-season grasses such as Bluegrass, Bentgrass and Ryegrass:** Don't let them go without water for more than four or five days in hot weather.



3. AMOUNT

- **Depends on your lawn:** **Reference value** for watering your lawn: 1" of water per week is usually enough.
- **Use timer to control watering:** it takes approximately 30 minutes to apply 1" of water.

EFFICIENT MOWING

- **Don't mow your lawn too short:** A 3 - 4" length is typically recommended.
- **A short lawn needs more water and fertilizer.** Mowing a lawn too short can open the lawn to weed invasion and damage the growth of the grass.
- **Keep the lawn mower blade sharp.** A dull mower blade tares the grass leaf, leaving a ragged appearance. This can result in increased disease problems.

EFFICIENT FERTILIZING

- **Timing:** Fall
- **Frequency:** Once per year
- **Depends on your lawn:** The best time to fertilize warm-season grasses is mid-summer; for cool-season grasses, it is early fall.

ALTERNATIVE STEP:

Change your mind...

Did you ever think about a...

Raingarden

... saving water ?

With an expected population growth of 190,000 between 2000 and 2030, McHenry County is one of the fastest growing counties in the Nation.

This growth might have the following effects on

McHenry County's groundwater resources:

- Higher pumping costs
- Degraded aquifer water quality
- Increased groundwater pumping could eventually lead to a drinking water shortage and have a severe negative impact on the environment
- The risk of contamination increases proportionally with increased population.

WHY

...lawn maintenance?

- Landscape irrigation accounts for almost half of residential water use.
- A lawn sprinkler spraying five gallons per minute uses 50% more water in one hour than ten toilet flushes, two 5-minute showers, two dishwasher loads and a full load of clothes together!
- **BUT: You can have a good looking lawn without wasting water, money and effort—you just have to be more EFFICIENT.**

WE CAN SHOW YOU HOW !!!



McHenry County Government
Water Resources

2200 N Seminary Ave
Woodstock, IL 6008

Phone: 815.334.4298

Fax: 815.338.3991

E-mail: clmckinney@co.mchenry.il.us

Website: www.mchenryh2o.com

