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### **Irrigation Tips for a Water-conserving Landscape**

Many homes, especially most newer homes, are equipped with automatic sprinkler systems consisting of low-shooting sprays for lawns and bubblers or drip systems for garden beds. These systems, with appropriate zoning, scheduling and basic maintenance, combined with a well-planned landscape, can create a healthy, water-conserving landscape.

1. Group landscape plants together with the same watering needs and then schedule watering for that group appropriately. For instance, group drought-tolerant plants in specified beds and water those beds less than the rose garden.
2. Plant trees and shrubs in landscaped beds rather than in turf areas to prevent over-watering them.
3. Use plants and turf appropriate for our climate because they will require less water.
4. When initially installing an irrigation system plan for several irrigation zones to allow you to customize the watering schedule.
5. Schedule each zone in your system to account for the sun, shade and wind exposure unique to that zone. For example, zones in shaded areas, such as those on the north side of the home or under shade trees, require less water than those in exposed locations.
6. Know the soil type in each zone. Soil type is not usually consistent throughout a yard. Areas with more clay will require less water while those with sandy or rocky soil will require more water.
7. Adjust your watering schedule seasonally to account for changes in weather.
8. Watering when the sun is low, winds are calm and temperatures are cool can save as much as much as 30% in your water usage.
9. Water long enough to saturate the root zone then let the soil dry between watering. This prevents root rot and encourages deep root growth.

10. Reduce runoff by watering for several short periods. For instance, instead of watering for 15 minutes, water for three 5 minute periods which allows the water to penetrate the soil rather than running off.
11. Inspect your system for leaks.
12. Clean filter screens periodically.
13. Adjust sprinkler head height. As plants grow they may interfere with the spray pattern of rotary heads. Add taller risers if necessary.
14. Adjust spray patterns if water is landing on sidewalks, patios, decks, etc...
15. Check the water pressure yearly. Water pressure can change and pressure that is too low or too high can affect the efficiency of the system.