

The keys to a water-wise yard: Maintain your irrigation system and water deeply no more than twice a week

We know the key to ensuring your landscape's health and beauty is watering correctly. While many people find outdoor watering a bit of a challenge in the desert, the reality is achieving water efficiency in your yard can be simple and effective.

While we often think more water is needed, especially with escalating temperatures, that is not always the case. To achieve efficient and effective watering (and save money) this summer, it really comes down to two main things:

Step 1 - Inspect and properly maintain your irrigation system

Before the weather intensifies for the summer months, make time for an irrigation check-up. Many homeowners trust their yards to an automated irrigation controller. While the controller may be reliable, your pipes, sprinkler heads, and drip lines are less so. Drip lines are particularly susceptible to weather. High temperatures, dust, and rain can clog, crack and break emitters and lines. In these situations, when your reliable irrigation controller comes on, plants don't get watered, or gallons of wasted water can pool or run off your yard into the street.

It's as simple as turning on your irrigation system and walking around to inspect that everything is working correctly. Check sprinkler heads for damage, including clogs caused by grass and leaves. [AMWUA's Smart Home Water Guide](#) can help. It will help you identify any leaks that need to be fixed before too much water waste happens. Additional information on irrigation system maintenance is also available on the [Landscaping with Style](#) website.

Many municipalities have rebates for smart irrigation controllers and workshops on irrigation systems, so visit your [local water conservation office](#) to learn more.

Step 2 - Water deeper and less often, even when the temperatures rise

Slow the flow. You want to water slowly and deeply to ensure the moisture reaches the roots of your plants. If water is applied too quickly, it won't absorb and will run into unwanted places in your yard. If you water deeply, you do not have to water as frequently. Proper watering is essential in our arid climate because the heat and wind quickly dry the soil's surface.



When watering correctly - deeply and not as frequently - even your thirstiest plants, like grass, should be watered no more than twice a week. [Established trees and shrubs need to be watered only once every other week. And desert-adapted plants need even less.](#)

Most people tend to overwater their entire landscapes, including low-water-use plants, which encourages excessive growth of diseases and other maintenance problems. Deep infrequent watering encourages strong, healthy root systems that can better tolerate intense heat and periods of drought.

The bottom line is you can keep it simple – water correctly and your landscape can thrive with much less water. Even here in the desert, as our temperatures increase, you do not need to water *more than twice a week*.

For more information on outdoor watering, check out this [interactive watering guide](#) created specifically for the Phoenix metro area and its unique conditions. This watering guide walks you through how much and how often to water and shows you how to set your irrigation timer, troubleshoot your system, and many other tips about outdoor watering.

The AMWUA communities have professional conservation staff dedicated to assisting residents and businesses in efficiently using water. Take a moment to virtually visit your [local water conservation office](#) to explore the resources available, or reach out to your local conservation experts for support.

As we move forward in times of challenges – warmer and drier climate and the worsening conditions on the Colorado River - practical lifestyle changes will positively impact our community's water future. Being wise with our outdoor water use is essential, regardless of the time of year. And in the end, a water-efficient landscape will save you time, water, and money while better ensuring a sustainable future for all of us here in the desert.

For over 50 years, the Arizona Municipal Water Users Association has helped protect our member cities' ability to provide their communities with assured, safe, and sustainable water supplies. For more information, visit www.amwua.org.