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Summer lawn conservation tips

Did you know that lawn watering uses more than half of all the water used by most California households? Here are some tips to help keep your lawn healthy all summer while lowering your monthly water bill.

- Only water when your lawn really needs it. You'll know when it's time if:
 - > the lawn takes on a blue-green or gray tinge;
 - > footprints on the lawn don't bounce back after a couple minutes; or
 - > an area is hard and uncomfortable to walk on barefoot.*(Also remember to go over these areas several times when you aerate your lawn.)*

If necessary, reset your automatic sprinkler to water more or less frequently.

- Water early in the morning or late at night, and avoid watering during windy times of the day. By watering during the day, you can lose as much as 20 to 25 percent of your water to evaporation from heat and wind. And during the heat of the day, water droplets clinging to grass can cause the sun to "burn" the individual blades. Set sprinklers to run at night between 9 p.m. and 9 a.m.
- Whether you use a sprinkler system or water by hand, keep the spray pattern coarse, low and slow. With fine mist or fog sprays, you're more likely to lose water to drifting and evaporation than with coarse sprays.
- Instead of watering the whole lawn to help with brown spots, water the dry spots by hand.
- If you water your lawn by hand, set a timer so you don't forget to move the hose.
- Don't water the sidewalks, driveway or gutter. Adjust your sprinklers so that the water lands on your lawn or garden – and only there.
- Check and maintain your sprinkler system regularly.
- Install a rain sensor with your automatic sprinkling system to override the system controller during and after rain storms.
- Don't scalp when you mow. A thicker lawn retains moisture better, so you won't have to water so often. Keep your mower set between 2 to 3 inches and remove no more than one-third of the blade each time you mow. And don't worry about raking up all the clippings – they serve as mulch that holds in more moisture.

To learn more about using water wisely,
visit California Drought Preparedness at
www.cadroughtprep.net.



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