

high or **9** low pressure?



If lots of water is misting into the air as your sprinklers are running, likely the pressure settings are too high and most of the spray is lost to evaporation. To fix **high pressure**, a pressure regulator can be installed on the whole system, on a specific zone or on an individual nozzle.

Nine times out of 10, **low pressure**, or weak spray,

means that there are too many heads on a zone. Generally, the range is 3-6 rotors per zone and 10-20 microspray per zone. Keep different sprinkler types in separate zones for appropriate pressure. Alternatively, low pressure may be due to a leak.

10 go chemical free!

Chemical pesticides & herbicides disturb the natural balance of the soil.

They kill the **“bad guys”** but they take the **“good guys”** down with them.

A healthy soil food web of microorganisms eliminates the need for pesticides because pests are naturally kept in check. Chemical fertilizers result in a lawn dependent on the expensive additives instead of a naturally healthy lawn ecosystem. Use natural alternatives, that focus on soil health, such as compost for fertilizer.

BONUS: it's less expensive and better for our waterways!



did you know? Most homeowners use **2–3 times more water in the summer months** than in the winter months.

Most of this is wasted by **poor watering practices** and **malfunctioning irrigation systems!**

Your water likely comes to you from a surface water or groundwater source. Generally, it is treated for quality, pressurized, and piped to your house after a sometimes long and energy intensive journey. **Don't let your water make this expensive journey for no reason!** **be water smart!**



Why not share these friendly tips with your neighbour?

FOR MORE INFORMATION: ask about our *'Landscape Guide to Water Efficiency'*

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TOP 10 IRRIGATION TIPS



After over a hundred audits of local residential irrigation systems, Team WaterSmart has put together the **TOP 10 CONSIDERATIONS** to help save on irrigation water.

You'll lower your bill & your garden will thrive!

because every drop counts



1 how long to water for?

Base run times on... **Plant type:** Zones should separate the lawn, shrubs and flower beds so you can tailor your watering schedule to the different plants' needs. Established plants need less water than young ones. **Seasonal Weather:**

Consider installing an Evapotranspiration sensor which measures wind, sun and moisture to communicate to your control box the exact amount of water that the soil needs.

Sprinkler type: Rotating & spray heads put out a lot of water and should run for shorter amount of time than drip or bubbler irrigation. *Check the Precipitation Rate of your sprinklers (inches/ hr) on the manufacturers spec sheet to help guide your run times.*

One inch of water per week is the rule of thumb!



COURTESY OF HUNTER INDUSTRIES

2 have a look!

Once a month, watch your system in action. This is **as easy as turning on the sprinklers one zone at a time** and observing each sprinkler running. That way you can catch any fixes before they run up your bill.



missing, broken or clogged? 3

If you notice a small geyser in your yard, that may indicate a missing or broken head. **Replace immediately!** If your nozzles are spraying in a strange pattern or at a lower flow rate, they may be clogged. Remove sprinkler nozzles to clean out debris every year. Simply unscrew the nozzle from the line, remove the filter and scrub with a toothbrush in a bucket.

Clean, intact nozzles result in efficient delivery of water!

4 catch that leak!

Puddles and saturated areas on the surface can indicate a leak. If the saturated spot is not close to a head, it is likely the underground line that is leaking. Replace punctured lines immediately. Older rotating sprinklers often leak from the base of the head. This

can be the result of a worn "wiper seal" that can be replaced—or you can try Teflon tape. Usually it is best to replace these older heads altogether. Low pressure spray can also be a warning sign of a leak somewhere in the line, as can a high water meter reading.



7 can you reduce your turf?

Reducing irrigated lawn area can be an excellent way to reduce outdoor water use. Letting turf go dormant or 'golden' in the summer is a good option. It will go green again with the fall rain. **"Rewilding"** lawn space with native plants, groundcovers, rockgardens and wildflowers can be a low maintenance, low water use and beautiful alternative.

8 are you watering what you want to?

Overspray is water that ends up on paved surfaces instead of your garden. This is a waste! **Make sure sprinklers water what they intend to by adjusting the angle and distance of spray appropriately.**



Most sprinklers can be adjusted by turning the body of the sprinkler to point where you want to spray. Some sprinkler heads have an adjustable dial on the top to decrease or increase the angle of spray. Think of the 180 degree edge of your driveway: make sure your adjustable heads aren't dialed to 270 degrees here!

Also, see if any spray is blocked by an overgrown shrub or a flower pot. Move any obstructions that may be preventing water from getting where you want it to go.

5 need to update?

Old hardware can waste water unnecessarily. Update to more efficient technology such as MP rotator heads for lawns. MP stands for match precipitation, which means an even distribution of water, less lost to evaporation. Choose micro/drip/bubbler irrigation for garden beds and shrubs. **More efficient hardware allows you to reduce run times & save water.**

is your soil a sponge? 6

Soil that is devoid of organic material is 'hydrophobic' — it does not absorb water. **Check to see how your soil is holding water.** The finger test: after your sprinklers run a cycle, stick your index finger in the soil. If it is moist or puddling on the surface but bone dry below, your soil needs help. Adding mulch and compost to build the soil is a great way to reduce watering times. **Healthy soil acts like a sponge, holding up to 90% of its weight in water.** A mulch layer of dried leaves or wood chips prevents surface evaporation.