

# LANDSCAPE SURVIVAL TIPS FOR A *HOT, DRY SUMMER*

## When Landscape Watering is **Limited**

### Check Sprinklers Monthly

Especially in a drought, it's important to check your sprinklers each month for water-wasting problems. These include sprinklers that are broken, leaking, tilted, clogged, spraying the sidewalk and misting versus spraying from too much pressure. Turn off water to the problem area and make repairs within 48 hours.

### Soak and Cycle

Some sprinkler systems apply water faster than the ground will absorb, causing water to runoff your landscape into the street and gutter. Here's how to stop runoff using the "soak and cycle" method:

- Turn on sprinklers and see how long it takes for water to begin running off.
- Adjust your sprinkler timer to water in three shorter segments.  
(If water begins running off after two minutes – but your landscape needs six minutes of watering time – set your timer to water in three shorter segments of two minutes each.
- Leave an hour between watering times to allow water to soak into the soil.



### Water Early or Later

Watering early in the day or later at night conserves water by allowing water to soak into the soil before evaporation can whisk it away.

### Mulch, Mulch, Mulch!

Mulch is like icing on a cake, because it keeps the soil moist the way icing keeps a cake moist. Mulch slows evaporation, allowing water to sink into the soil, moderates soil temperature and breaks down into nutrients for plants. Be sure to add two to three inches of organic mulch (e.g., leaves, wood chips) around trees and plants for the greatest benefit.

### Use the Screwdriver Test

The best way to tell if you need to water is by testing. Stick an eight-inch screwdriver into the ground. If you can push it more than three inches below the surface, your landscape does not need to be watered.

### Leave Grass Long

Adjust the height setting on your mower up one or two notches. Taller grass promotes a deeper, more extensive root system with increased drought tolerance, reduces evaporation and shades out weeds.

