



COOPERATIVE EXTENSION PROGRAM
Prairie View A&M University

Fact Sheet

SUMMER LAWN WATERING

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The lawn is generally the most visible part of the home landscape. Proper water of the lawn is very important to help maintain the look and health of the lawn, particularly in the summer months. These are some common questions and answers about summer lawn watering.

When should I water my lawn?

Apply water to your lawn when the grass begins to show signs of stress. Generally, the grass will begin to discolor and wilt. Most grasses will turn dull and the leaves will begin to roll or fold.

How much water should I apply?

You should apply water until the top 4-6 inches of soil are wet. This encourages the roots of the grass to grow deeply into the soil. Deeper rooted plants need less supplemental water. Watering for short frequent periods will cause the plants to have a weak and shallow root system and be more susceptible to stress.

What time of day is best to water the lawn?

Early in the morning is the best time to water your lawn. Less water is lost to evaporation during this time. Also, your lawn is less likely susceptible to many diseases that are caused by watering in late afternoon.

Does mower height effect water use?

Close mowing increases the water requirement of your lawn. During hot and dry summer conditions, you should raise your mower height. Bermuda and zoysia grass lawns should be mowed at a height of 2 inches. St. Augustine lawns should be mowed at a height of 3 inches.

What can I do to increase water efficiency?

Controlling thatch buildups can increase the amount of water that penetrates the soil. Another way to increase efficiency is to aerate the soil. This allows for better utilization of soil moisture.

If I fertilize my lawn, will it make a difference in how I water it?

It is O.K. to fertilize your lawn, even during the summer. Just remember that fertilization will cause the grass to grow faster. Frequent fertilizations will increase the water requirement of your lawn.

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