

Watering (Sod)

Newly installed sod watering techniques:

You now have a newly sodded lawn, here are a few tips to ensure proper growth:

- Water is essential to all life...too little water and we die, too much and we drown. The same is true of the grass in our lawns. Water makes up 70% to 80% of the weight of our lawn grasses and the clippings alone are nearly 90% water. While most people are concerned about not watering their lawns enough, the fact is that more lawns are damaged or destroyed by over-watering.
- Newly installed turfgrass sod has very important watering needs. Proper watering immediately after installation will ensure the turf gets established, and it will also have an impact on how well the lawn continues to flourish for years to come.
- Begin watering new turfgrass sod within a half hour after it is laid on the soil. The soil 3 to 4 inches below the surface should be moist.
- Pull back a corner of the turf and push a screwdriver or other sharp tool into the soil. It should push in easily and have moisture along the first 3 or 4 inches, or you need to apply more water.
- Make absolutely certain that water is getting to all areas of your new lawn, regardless of the type of sprinkling system you use. Corners and edges are easily missed by many sprinklers and are particularly vulnerable to drying out faster than the center portion of your lawn. Also, areas near buildings dry-out faster because of reflected heat and may require more water.
- For the next two weeks keep the below-turf soil surface moist with daily, or more frequent watering. Especially hot, dry or windy periods will necessitate increased watering amounts and frequency.
- As the turf starts to root into the soil, it will be difficult, impossible and/or harmful to pull back a corner to check beneath the turf, but you can still use a sharp tool to check moisture depth by pushing it through the turf and into the soil.
- Water as early in the morning as possible to take advantage of the daily start of the grass's normal growing cycle, usually lower wind speeds and considerably less loss of water because of high temperature evaporation.
- During the growing season most lawns will grow very well with a maximum total of one inch of water a week, coming either from rain or applied water. This amount of water, properly applied, is all that is required for the health of the grass, providing it is applied evenly and saturates the underlying soil to a depth of 4 to 6 inches.
- Infrequent and deep watering is preferred to frequent and shallow watering because the roots will only grow as deeply as its most frequently available water supply. Deeply rooted grass has a larger "soil-water bank" to draw moisture from and this will help the grass survive drought and hot weather that rapidly dries out the upper soil layer