

WATER WISELY WITH DRIP IRRIGATION

Drip irrigation. Trickle irrigation. Microirrigation. No matter what the name, the benefits are the same. First used in ancient times when water, buried in clay pots, seeped into the ground, drip irrigation is a low-volume, low-pressure system that slowly and steadily delivers water directly to the root zones of plants. It runs on normal household water pressure, uses minimal water and electricity, and provides the convenience of a permanent watering system that supports plants without being seen. As summer rains become less and less reliable, a water-thrifty drip irrigation system becomes an attractive tool that delivers both immediate and long-lasting benefits.

Water Savings. Drip irrigation can save up to 50 percent over conventional irrigation because it delivers the water directly to your plants' root zone.

Healthier Plants. By keeping moisture off the foliage, drip irrigation decreases leaf burn, reduces fungal diseases and results in healthier growth.

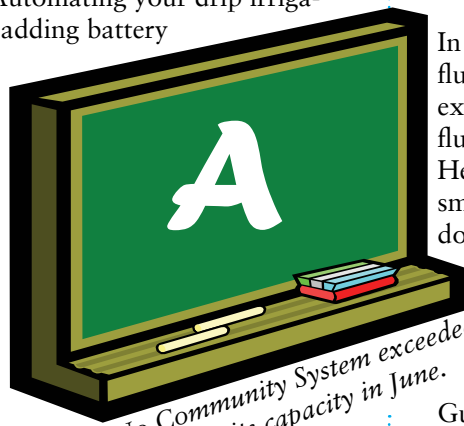
DRIP TIPS

- Use high quality parts that resist clogging and damage.
- Lay drip lines under mulch; avoid burying under dirt.
- Lay out drip tubing in straight or gently curving lines.
- Blow air through the lines at the end of the season.
- Disconnect the system in the fall and bring components inside to prevent freeze damage.
- Consider soil type, root structure, line friction and changes in elevation when placing emitters.

Convenience. Automating your drip irrigation system by adding battery or electric timers allows watering to be scheduled for the best time of day, helps prevent the too-dry/too-wet cycles that stress plants and maintains soil moisture at optimum levels.

Low Maintenance. Drip irrigation slowly releases water only in the area where your plants are located, reducing the number of weeds appearing in your landscape.

Drip irrigation can dramatically lower water usage, lower monthly water bills and provide water to areas that are hard to reach. At a time when costs continue to rise, there is no better time than the present to use our resources in the most efficient way possible.



COMMUNITY SYSTEMS CITIZEN ADVISORY GROUP

We held a successful kick-off meeting on June 16 of the newly formed Community Systems Citizen Advisory Group. Comprising members from Beacon Hill, Lenah Run, Raspberry Falls, Selma and Village Green, the Citizen Advisory Group is a forum to address issues related to all Community Systems. The group will meet monthly through December 2009 to discuss water use and conservation issues. Topics discussed during the June meeting included general discussions about rates, fluoridation, county planning and the differences between Community Systems and the Central System.

In response to a question about fluoridating the community wells, we explained that while some systems are fluoridated, most are not because State Health advises against fluoridation in small systems due to the risk of overdose. Implementing fluoride treatment within a Community System requires a community vote because of the additional operational costs involved.

Guest speaker Pat Giglio of Loudoun County Planning Department presented the reasons why Community Systems are independent from the Central Water System, citing that the Comprehensive Plan controls population density in the western part of the county by restricting the expansion of central water utilities.

Topics Scheduled For Discussion	
Month	Topic
July	Rate Setting Policy
August	Sustainable Yield
September	System Design/Capacity

NEWS Leak

PRO SECRETS FOR A BEAUTIFUL YARD

If you have an irrigation system, here are five tips to help keep your yard healthy and beautiful while you water efficiently and effectively.

1. Water **Deeply** and **Infrequently**

Generally speaking, a healthy lawn requires 1 inch of water every 7-10 days. Watering too much and too frequently results in shallow roots, causing the grass to become dependent on you to provide the water it needs. Further, repeated over-watering promotes weed growth, disease and fungus. To encourage deeper, stronger roots, water once every 2 to 3 days in dry weather as deeply as possible without causing run-off. Saturate the root zone and allow the soil to dry between watering.



2. Water **Early** for Best Results

Watering between 4:00 am and 8:00 am, when temperatures are cooler and winds are lighter, saves money and water while keeping your lawn and landscape healthier. Watering in the early morning reduces water loss from evaporation and avoids stronger daytime winds that may blow water away.

3. **Cycle** and **Soak**

Soil can absorb only so much water at a time. Heavy soils and slopes sometimes can't absorb water fast enough to prevent it from running off. To allow for better soil absorption and reduce runoff, program your timer to water for several shorter periods, with about an hour in between, to let the water soak into the soil and reach the plant roots, where it's needed most.

4. Take **Careful Aim**

Runoff is more than just "money down the drain." It damages the grass and flows into storm sewers, carrying soil, pet waste, fertilizers and other pollutants into nearby lakes, streams and rivers. Minimizing runoff helps protect your groundwater, too.

5. Adjust for **Weather**

There's no point in watering prior to, during, or after a rainstorm, so check your controller weekly and adjust for weather conditions. Shut it off in the rain and shut it off anytime we've received an inch or more of rain within the last 10 days. Add a rain shut-off switch to your system. This inexpensive device keeps sprinklers off in wet weather and can be retrofitted to most systems by your contractor.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF OUR BILL STUFFER?



Would you like to keep receiving this bill stuffer in paper format? Or would you prefer to receive it electronically? We could deliver this insert to your email inbox quarterly. Let us know what you think by sending us an email to customerservice@loudounwater.org. You can also use this address to sign up in advance if we move to a paperless format.

