

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Boulder, Broomfield and North Metro water suppliers remind customers to continue to use water wisely throughout the summer

NORTH METRO DENVER CITIES - July 29, 2013 - During the summer months, metro-area water suppliers along with Governor Hickenlooper, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) WaterSense program and the Irrigation Association encourage water customers to focus on smart irrigation and continue to use water wisely.

In general, July and August are some of the highest outdoor water use months of the year.

“It’s still not uncommon to see customers watering during the day,” said Laura Wing, City of Thornton, Water Conservation Administrator. “If you water during the heat of the day, a large portion of that water is lost to evaporation and never makes it to the ground.”

By following simple tips like watering after 6 p.m. and before 10 a.m., customers can help save water and even reduce their water bills. Watering at night is just one of several tips area water providers offer. Other tips include, watching and repairing leaking sprinkler heads and only watering two times a week.

“We’ve talked a lot about drought concerns and while the moisture we’ve gotten has certainly helped, the dry weather persists,” said Kathy Schnoor, City and County of Broomfield, Environmental Services Superintendent. “The simple fact remains that when you over irrigate, you make lawns less drought tolerant. When you water deeper, less frequently, grass roots grow deeper, requiring less irrigation. People tend to think their grass needs more water than it really does.”

In addition to being able to grow deeper roots, grasses like Kentucky Bluegrass have an amazing ability to go dormant for extended periods of time. Typically, overwatering occurs because customers have broken or leaky sprinkler systems, assume the turf needs more water

than it does or install new turf at the wrong time of year. Customers are discouraged from installing new turf, shrubs or trees during the summer.

“We encourage people to Xeriscape, but recognize people will always have turf,” said Russ Sands, City of Boulder, Water Conservation Manager. “It’s about promoting low-water grasses and asking customers to watch for leaks. We want the water on the landscaping, not running down the curb!”

Simple fixes to sprinkler systems often have big impacts. Misaligned or broken sprinkler heads can spray water onto sidewalks, streets and drains. Sprinkler system maintenance should be an annual task and can save customers water and money.

For programs and information to help residents increase their water-wise practices, customers can visit their city’s website. For more tips and efficient EPA WaterSense labeled products like irrigation controllers, customers can visit the EPA WaterSense website at www.epa.gov/watersense.

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Summer Lawn Watering Guidelines

for Residents and Businesses in Boulder and Broomfield Counties

These eight water conservation tips can help you and your city conserve water, especially during dry years. These best practices are supported by the cities within Boulder and Broomfield counties. Always check with your water supplier for any additional lawn watering rules or any drought-related restrictions.

1. Wait to water.

Don't turn on your sprinkler too early in the season. Leaving lawns dormant longer saves water. Hand-water trees as needed when dry conditions persist.

2. Water twice a week. Make turf drought-tolerant.

Watering deeply twice a week and supplementing with rain to make grass roots grow deeper and go longer without water. For sprinkler systems, cycle run times to prevent run-off. Instead of setting a zone to run for fifteen minutes, change it to water for five minutes once an hour over a three-hour period early in the morning.

3. Don't water between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.

When you water during the day, less water reaches your lawn. Water at night or in the early morning to prevent water loss caused by evaporation and wind.

4. If it rains, water less.

Watch the weather and adjust watering days and times accordingly. If you have a control clock, use rain sensors to shut-off irrigation during rain events.

5. Watch for irrigation leaks.

Watch for broken sprinkler heads or damaged irrigation lines that water waste. Repair leaks quickly.

6. Let grass grow longer before you cut it.

Raise your lawn mower blade and protect your lawn from heat by letting grass grow longer.

7. Water plants and trees, not sidewalks.

Don't spray down your driveway with water- use a broom. Broken sprinkler heads getting your sidewalk wet? Make sprinkler repairs and adjustments to keep water on your plants, turf and trees.

8. Install low-water landscape and irrigation.

Avoid installing landscaping during the hottest months, especially in dry years. When appropriate, install drought-resistant turf, trees and xeric plants. Where possible, use low-water drip irrigation.

Check with your water supplier for any additional lawn watering rules.

