Resources

Irrigation with a Pro -
U.S. EPA WaterSense Program

https://www.epa.gov/watersense/irrigation-pro

Irrigation for Lawns and Gardens -
Georgia Cooperative Extension Service

http://extension.uga.edu/publications/

Basic Repairs and Maintenance for
Home Landscape Irrigation Systems

http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ae451

www.northgeorgiawater.org

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EPA WaterSense PARTNER

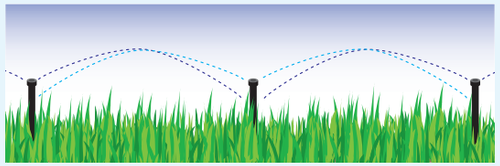
Maintenance Guide for Landscape Irrigation Systems

A well-maintained landscape irrigation system keeps your system running efficiently and can help to reduce your water consumption, save money, and maintain a healthy and attractive landscape. According to U.S. EPA's WaterSense Program, properly managing your irrigation system can help to reduce your annual outdoor water use by nearly 8,800 gallons, equivalent to the amount of water used to take 500 showers!

Be sure to check for the WaterSense label when determining which irrigation system, fixtures, and equipment are right for your lawn.

Uniform System Coverage

1. Adjust sprinklers to have an on-target trajectory so only your lawn is watered and not the house, paved surfaces, sidewalk or street. Depending on where you live, actions such as these may be in violation of your jurisdiction's Water Waste Policy.



Head to Head uniform system coverage

2. Make sure your sprinkler heads, when extended, rise above the height of the grass for uniform coverage. Use taller heads in flower and shrub beds. Check that sprinkler heads are not tilted or broken.

Source: Mike Clark, Johnson & Associates

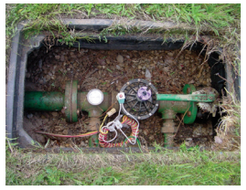
Sprinkler heads are only directed towards grass so that the pavement is not being watered.

3. If you notice extensive uneven sprinkler head sprays within a zone, this can be a result of pressure problems. Make sure all sprinkler heads in a zone spray evenly. If problems persist, have a licensed or certified landscape professional check the system's design for water pressure and uniformity problems.

Annual System Check

Before running your system in the spring...

1. Clean valve boxes and rain sensor of dirt and debris. Check to make sure rain sensor is working properly.



Source: Hydro Environmental Inc.

Valve box

Photo courtesy of James Phillips

Rain sensor

2. Inspect and clean filters. Filters are usually located near where the water exits the house. To clean out sediment, open the flush valve at the bottom of the filter and turn on the water for 1 minute (a). To clean sediment screen, turn the water off, remove filter body and spray with hose (b).

3. Flush your system. Remove the last sprinkler head in each line and let the water run for a few minutes to flush out any dirt and debris. Replace the sprinkler heads and turn the system on, running one valve at a time.

4. Check your timer and the battery. Make sure that your system runs for the scheduled amount of time. Set timer to comply with watering requirements. State law allows outdoor watering for residential purposes before 10 a.m. and after 4 p.m. If the Georgia Environmental Protection Division declares a drought response, watering restrictions may apply. Go to gadrought.org for more information.

Automatic Control Timer

Check your irrigation manual for details for your system.

Regular Maintenance

Check your system once a month. **Observation is the key to water savings.**

- Look for signs of under-watering or over-watering such as brown spots and areas that are greener or consistently wet and soggy. Adjust for uniformity.

Source: Mike Clark, Johnson & Associates

Uneven application

- Check for blocked spray streams and check the position of the sprinklers. Adjust sprinkler heads that are tilted, blocked by grass and plants, or buried.

Source: Hydro Environmental Inc.

Sprinkler head is buried and can not pop up to properly water the lawn

- Check the valves, sprinkler heads, nozzles and emitters for obvious problems such as clogged or misaligned heads, bubbling and misting. Replace those that are broken or cracked.
- Look for pinched or broken tubing and straighten or replace it.
- Cap sprinkler heads that are no longer needed in order to prevent system leakage.

Periodically have your system audited by a licensed or certified landscape professional.

Source: Hydro Environmental Inc.

Source: Mike Clark, Johnson & Associates

Improperly functioning rotor sprinkler head

Properly functioning rotor sprinkler head

Winterization

At the end of the watering season, usually around October...

1. Turn off water supply at the main valve.
2. Set the irrigation controller to the "rain" or "off" setting.
3. Turn on each valve to release pressure from the pipes.
4. Let the water drain out of the system or have it blown out by a professional to protect your system from during the winter months.