

IT'S ABOUT TIME: CONTROL YOUR IRRIGATION TIMER TO SAVE TIME AND MONEY



The Water - Use It Wisely campaign was launched in 1999 to promote an ongoing water conservation ethic among Arizona's rapidly growing population. Partners include the cities of Mesa, Phoenix, Scottsdale, Tempe, Peoria, Chandler, Gilbert, Glendale, Avondale, Surprise, Goodyear, Yuma and Sedona. Additional partners include the Arizona Municipal Water Users Association, Global Water Resources, Arizona-American Water Company, Central Arizona Project, Bureau of Reclamation and SRP. Following Arizona's lead, more than 300 towns, cities, states, utilities, and private and public organizations have adopted the Water - Use It Wisely campaign and are running the program throughout North America.

As the temperatures start to rise, we desert dwellers know the rule – hydrate, hydrate, hydrate. Many of us also take this as a signal to give our plants more water, as well. But, adults may be hard pressed to drink too much water, the same isn't true for our landscapes. Properly setting your irrigation timer can help ensure your plants get just the right amount of water – and that you're not wasting water and money.

To take the “mystery” out of setting the irrigation timer, Valley water providers have created an irrigation timer tutorial that you can visit anytime at www.wateruseitwisely.com. Most homeowners actually overestimate the amount of water they need to program on their irrigation timers. On average, Arizonans use as much as two-thirds of their water outdoors. When the irrigation timer is set to water too much and too frequently, much of this water ends up being wasted, leading to high utility bills and plants that actually die from overwatering – not from heat.

The Web site tutorial offers six easy steps to enter a program into your timer, lists some helpful programming tips and suggests what to look for when purchasing a controller. The Web site also features an interactive watering guide that helps you determine precisely how much water you need for turf, Xeriscape plants and trees, as well as a host of other highly-effective water saving ideas. By following these tips, you can reduce your water usage by as much as 50 percent and keep your plants healthier throughout the hot summer months.

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Add one – It's About Time: Control Your Irrigation

Following are a few tips for properly irrigating your landscape to conserve water.

- Purchase a timer with a scheduled length of 14 days or greater, since desert-adapted plants require longer periods between watering.
- Adjust sprinkler heads so that only the lawn is being watered, not the house or sidewalk.
- Don't run sprinklers on windy days – most of the water will be lost to evaporation.
- Water plants more deeply but less frequently to create healthier landscapes.
- Water or irrigate grass in the early morning between 3 a.m. and 6 a.m. to minimize water loss from evaporation.
- Turn off your irrigation timers during or after rainfall to eliminate unnecessary watering.

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Add two – It's About Time: Control Your Irrigation

For more information on the appropriate use of irrigation timers, and 100+ other ways to save water, visit www.wateruseitwisely.com.