

## The Odd/Even Defined Irrigation Schedule

**Q** What are the designated times for the Defined Irrigation Schedule?

**A** The new plan restricts landscape irrigation by programmable sprinkler systems to two days per week, based on an Odd-Even address code.

- Addresses ending in odd numbers (1, 3, 5, 7 or 9) will be allowed to water from 8 p.m. on Fridays through 4 a.m. on Saturdays and at 8 p.m. on Tuesdays through 4 a.m. on Wednesdays.
- Addresses ending in even numbers (0, 2, 4, 6, or 8) may water from 8 p.m. on Saturdays through 4 a.m. on Sundays and from 8 p.m. on Wednesdays through 4 a.m. on Thursdays.

**Q** What do you mean by programmable irrigation systems?

**A** An “irrigation system,” in the context of this policy, means a lawn or landscape irrigation system consisting of one or more sprinklers connected directly or indirectly to the public water supply by piping or hose, whether operated electronically or manually. Hose end sprinklers are allowed anytime.

**Q** I am confused about the new Defined Irrigation Schedule. Is it mandatory for everyone?

**A** From and after the effective date (January 1), it shall be a violation for any person to irrigate a lawn or landscape using an irrigation system, unless such irrigation occurs during the designated irrigation times for the property. However, the Village of Creekside is in Harris County and the water there is regulated by a MUD outside The Woodlands. Mud 40 did not adopt the DIS but supports a voluntary odd/even irrigation schedule and implementation of the Drought Contingency Plan as warranted.

**Q Are commercial properties, churches and public facilities included in this Schedule?**

**A** Yes.

**Q Does the Defined Irrigation Schedule apply to everyone in The Woodlands?**

**A** No.

**Q Is there a fine, and if so, how much is it?**

**A** At the occurrence of a second offense, a **surcharge** will be assessed to your bill for the following month. The process will work as follows:

<b>1<sup>st</sup> violation</b> in any 12-month period	<b>Notice/Warning</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> violation</b> in any 12-month period	<b>\$50</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> violation</b> in any twelve month period	<b>\$100</b>
<b>Each subsequent violation</b>	<b>\$200</b>

**Q If I get a warning for a violation occurring before June 1, 2013, does it count as my first warning?**

**A** Yes, it does.

**Q What if I am watering on my specified day and it rains? Will I receive a citation?**

**A** No, but we encourage everyone who has an automated irrigation system to install a rain sensor. The WJPA offers a 50% rebate, up to \$150.00, on the purchase and installation of a **rain sensor**, **ET Smart Controller**, or **other water saving device** for your sprinkler system. A rain sensor will detect the presence of rain and shut off your system automatically. This alleviates the large problem in The Woodlands of numerous sprinklers running during a rain event. The ET Smart Controller offers several ways to save water. It considers evaporation and transpiration rates, humidity, temperature and rainfall before allowing the sprinkler system to apply water. See <http://www.wjpa.org> for more information.

**Q What if I'm watering on my specified day and the water runs off into the street? Will I be cited?**

**A** No. However, water runoff occurs either because of overwatering or because the ground has become impermeable. Check the soil, and if it is compacted, add ¼ inch of organic material to your lawn in mid spring and again in the fall. If compaction is not the problem, then you are probably overwatering. Have your irrigation system checked by a licensed irrigator. The Woodlands Irrigation System Evaluation program is free. See [wjpa.org](http://wjpa.org) for more information.

**Q How will you determine who is violating the policy?**

**A** WJPA inspectors and personnel will have cameras which record time and date of violations. They will photograph the violation and it will be entered into a data base.

**Q How do I know if I've been cited?**

**A** You will receive a ticket, similar to a traffic ticket. If possible, the citation will be handed to you. If you are not at home, it will be hung on your front door.

**Q What do you mean by a "hose-end sprinkler"?**

**A** "Hose-end sprinkler" means a portable, non-anchored sprinkler connected directly or indirectly to the public water supply system by a hose to irrigate any lawn or landscape.

**Q Can I use a hose-end sprinkler anytime?**

**A** Yes. The use of hose-end sprinklers is allowed at any time.

**Q May I use a hand-held hose to water anytime?**

**A** Yes, but only if it is equipped with a functioning positive shut-off device.

**Q Does the Defined Irrigation Schedule include drip irrigation?**

**A** No. Use of drip irrigation systems are permitted at any time.

**Q How about soaker hoses?**

**A** Soaker hoses may be used at any time.

**Q I water my garden with a watering can or bucket. Am I exempt?**

**A** Yes, you are. Irrigating with a watering can or bucket is allowable at any time.

**Q We are a business group with multiple addresses. Which address do we use?**

**A** For apartment complexes, office building complexes or other properties containing multiple street addresses, use the lowest street address number to determine your designated irrigation times.

**Q I am installing a new irrigation system and I want to test it. Is there an exception for this?**

**A** Yes. If you are installing a new irrigation system you may test it outside the designated Defined Irrigation Schedule. However, **permitting is now required for installation of new irrigation systems**. Make sure you comply with the new law.

**Q I am repairing an irrigation system and I want to test it. Is there an exception for it?**

**A** Yes. If you are repairing an existing system, you may test it outside the Defined Irrigation Schedule.

**Q I own a commercial nursery and need to water my stock. When may I irrigate?**

**A** Irrigating nursery stock at a commercial plant nursery may be done at any time.

**Q** **I have a hardship that will keep me from watering on the Defined Irrigation Schedule. Are there exceptions?**

**A** Yes. The WJPA Board of Directors may, in special cases, grant variances of this policy to someone demonstrating significant hardship or need. The decision of the Board will be final.

**Q** **If I do get a variance, can it be revoked?**

**A** Yes it can. The Board of Directors may revoke a previously granted variance if it determines that the significant hardship or need is no longer applicable, or the terms of the variance are being violated, or the health, safety or welfare of other persons requires revocation. The decision shall be final.

**Q** **Why has this policy been adopted? Is there really a water shortage?**

**A** The short answer is yes, there is a water crisis. The longer answer- Montgomery County faces a water supply crisis. Groundwater has been the area's sole source of public supply for decades; however, rapid population growth over the last 20 years has severely depleted this vital natural resource. Groundwater supplies in our aquifers are now declining at an alarming rate as significantly more water is being extracted than can be replenished by natural recharge.

As a result, alternate (and more expensive) surface water supplies are being developed to reduce groundwater usage. In addition, policies and practices must be established to reduce wasteful water usage. This new policy is intended to reduce the wasteful use of water in landscape irrigation practices. Current irrigation practices by many residents are wasteful because they provide more water to local plants and grasses than is necessary. Local plants and grasses in Montgomery County require no more than one inch of water per week during the peak summer periods and even less water during non-peak periods. Further, daytime watering results in unnecessary water evaporation losses.

Wasteful landscape irrigation practices place a significant strain on our water supply and distribution system. Correcting these wasteful practices will help stabilize our water supply for future residents, reduce the expense to provide for increased and unnecessary demand and set a positive community example for being good stewards of a critical natural resource.