



Towards having a healthy lawn

By Bob Dailey

Woodlands residents have serious questions about keeping a lawn healthy. The most persistent: how often and how much should one water to keep grass green and healthy?

Here are some helpful tips:

- St. Augustine, Bermuda, Zoysia and a number of other turf grasses commonly used for lawns in The Woodlands do not require more than an inch of water ever week to 10 days. In fact, more water than this actually harms the grass, causing harmful fungal infections and grub worm activity.
- If watering twice a week, do not water an inch each time. Instead, water one-half inch each time.
- If watering twice a week, and it rains during that week, take into account the amount of rainfall and adjust the system accordingly. A real time saving (and money-saving) solution is to install a rain sensor to your irrigation 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. And, 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 sprinkler systems. Contact Customer Service at 281-367-1271 for information on obtaining a rebate.
- Lawns high in organic matter hold more water and distribute it down to the roots of the grass much more quickly and efficiently than hard-packed soil. So add organic matter into the soil. Organic matter can be compost you produce yourself, compost purchased from a commercial compost manufacturer, cottonseed meal, coffee grounds, corn gluten or alfalfa meal. Do not add manure unless it has been composted first.
- Rainwater, unlike tap water, tends to be high in nitrogen and is much more desirable for lawn use.

Keep your lawn healthy and green and save money on your water bill by using these simple methods.

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