

Drip It, Don't Drown It: How to Water Smart This Summer

Because residential landscapes feature a wide variety of plants and trees—each requiring different amounts of water—it's important to know how much water you should apply to your landscape to help it to survive and thrive...and not drown.

Unlike grass, desert-adapted, water-efficient landscapes on drip irrigation systems require much less water, even during the brutal hot days of Southern Nevada's summer. In fact, most drip-irrigated landscapes can get by with two or three days of watering per week, as drip irrigation delivers water at a slower rate while still providing sufficient water to plants that need it.

There are multiple factors that go into how long drip irrigation should run, as the amount of drip irrigation needed can vary based on the emitter flow rate, the soil type, and the surrounding weather conditions.

To determine how long to set your drip irrigation, first identify if your drip emitters have a high- or a low-flow rate, based on gallons per hour (gph). If you observe a consistent flow, stream or sprinkler-like release of water, then your emitters are likely high-flow; a bead-like release of water drops indicates a low-flow emitter. Once you've determined the flow rate of your emitters, follow these suggested watering times:

- High-flow emitter (up to 20 gph): 20-40 minutes or less
- Low-flow emitter (up to 4 gph): 30 minutes or less
- Low-flow emitter (up to 2 gph): 60 minutes or less
- Low-flow emitter (up to 1 gph): 90 minutes or less

As a reminder, the community's mandatory summer watering restrictions, in effect through Aug. 31, prohibit sprinkler watering between 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. Sunday watering is prohibited all year long. Water grass three times a day for about four minutes each cycle, spaced an hour apart, for a total of no more than 12 minutes per watering day. Also, set your drip irrigation to two to three days a week, adding days only as conditions warrant.

For more information on drip irrigation watering visit snwa.com