

# Water Wise Lawn Care

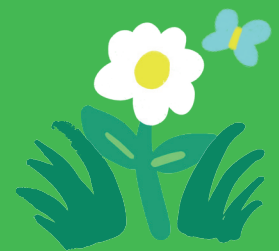
## Information Sheet

### Water Conservation

#### A healthy lawn needs less water.

Water is a precious resource. It takes a long time to replace the water that we use. We need to be careful with our water use to make sure there is enough water for all of us, including ecosystems and fish too.

Water is a precious resource.



#### Why use water wisely?

Climate change will cause longer summer droughts which puts pressure on our drinking water system. Being careful with our water use helps build resilience in our system, making sure there is enough water for all of us, including ecosystems and fish too.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Residents are the **66%** water users in the region.\*

**66%**

RESIDENTS

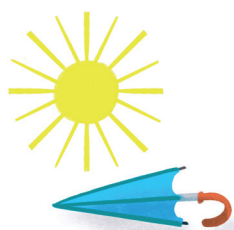
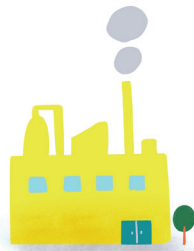
**21%**

INDUSTRY + COMMERCIAL + INSTITUTIONS



**3%**

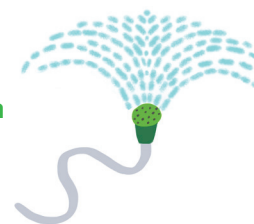
AGRICULTURE



**44%** ↑

Water use goes up in summer, when we have little rain to replenish our reservoir.

This increase is mostly from outdoor watering.



You can help by using water wisely.

\*10% remaining falls under "other". Learn more stats at [crd.bc.ca/water](http://crd.bc.ca/water)

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## Lawn care best practices

### SPRING

(MARCH – MAY)

**Plan ahead.** Plan your lawn care routine and mark the dates in your calendar every spring according to the Stage 1 Watering Schedule.

**Create healthy soil.** Add compost and leaf mulch for soil organisms to eat and then recycle nutrients into the soil. Good soil structure is created by billions of soil organisms to allow air, water and plant roots in the soil. A healthy soil will hold more nutrients and water resulting in healthier plants.

**Aerate.** Aerate lawns using a manual aerator to reduce compaction and help nutrients, oxygen and water move into the soil. After aerating, top dress with compost.

**Remove thatch.** Remove thick thatch (dead grass stems), over 1–2 cm deep using a rake or a de-thatching machine to allow water and nutrients to penetrate the soil.

**Apply lime.** Apply a half treatment of lime to adjust soil to a neutral pH, which protects grass from heat and drought. Local garden centres have tools for proper pH measuring and lime application.

**Overseed.** Overseed with a low-maintenance mixture such as micro clover, fescues and perennial rye grasses for a drought-tolerant and weed-repellant lawn. Plan to overseed at least a month before the start of watering schedule (May 1).

**Mow high.** Set your mowing height to 5–6 cm and cut no more than the top third of the grass length. Longer grass encourages stronger, deeper roots, and can help shade the soil to reduce evaporation. Leave grass clippings to decompose (grasscycling); they act as mini-mulch to reduce evaporation and add nutrients. Don't cut wet grass.

**Run through your watering system** looking for leaks from frost or freezing. Learn how with our Irrigation Maintenance Series on YouTube at [CRDVictoria](#).



### SUMMER

(MAY - AUGUST)

**Gold is the new green.** Lawns naturally go dormant in the summer months and will bounce back to green when the rains return.

**Water wisely.** Did you know that deep but less frequent watering encourages a strong root system and a healthy lawn? For a green lawn, water up to one inch (2.5cm) per week, in the driest conditions during the designated days and times of the CRD's watering schedule. After a rain, skip watering until next week. Place an empty can or watering gauge around your lawn to determine how long your sprinkler takes to deliver one inch of water.

**Schedule** your sprinkler system to cycle and soak watering. Learn how to set your controller with our Controller Scheduling video on our YouTube channel at [CRDVictoria](#).

**Check for leaks.** A leaking irrigation system can cost \$250 per month depending on the size of the leak! Learn how to find and fix leaks with the our Irrigation Maintenance Series on YouTube at [CRDVictoria](#).

**Weed often.** Remove weeds regularly as they compete for water. Overseed damaged areas before weeds can re-establish. Be sure to handle invasive species properly.



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### FALL

(SEPTEMBER - NOVEMBER)

**Adjust your watering** to account for changes in rainfall and weather.

**De-thatch and aerate** your lawn and top dress with compost.

**Overseed** thinned areas.

**Avoid fertilizers and pesticides.** Practice natural gardening techniques like adding clover to feed your lawn naturally. The use of pesticides and fertilizers damage our waterbodies, when it rains much is washed into our local creeks, streams and rivers where it degrades fish habitat. If you do use them, make sure to dispose of them properly.

**Apply lime.** Apply a half treatment of lime, if needed.

**Convert to native plants.** Replace unused areas of lawn with native plants. Adapted to our dry summers, native plants require little to no watering once established. With fewer pests and disease, they are a lower maintenance alternative and support local bugs, birds and pollinators.



### WINTER

(DECEMBER - FEBRUARY)

**Add raked leaves** and twigs to compost or use as garden mulch.

**Sharpen mower blades.** A dull blade can tear the grass, weakening it to invading weeds.

**Winterize** your irrigation system. Learn how with our Irrigation Maintenance Series on YouTube at [CRDVictoria](#).

**Minimize foot traffic** on lawns while soil is soggy with winter rains.



## TOP TIPS FOR A WATERWISE LAWN & GARDEN



**Gold is the new green.** Let your lawn go golden this summer and it'll bounce back with the fall rains.



**Just 1 inch.** If you aren't ready to go golden, keep your lawn green with only one inch of water a week, including rain.



**Cycle & soak.** Water in short bursts to let it seep into the soil, promoting strong roots.



**Garden with native plants.** They're beautiful and are naturally suited for our climate. In our dry summers, they require little to no watering and support biodiversity.

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### Find us online:



Check out our YouTube channel at CRD Victoria for quick videos on being water wise, irrigation maintenance and more!

- YouTube at **CRDVictoria**
  - Water Wise Summer videos
  - Irrigation Maintenance Series

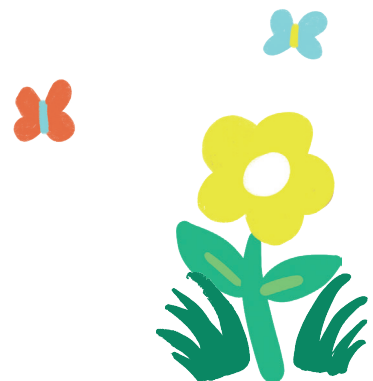
Find us on social media:

Twitter & Instagram: **@crd\_bc**

Facebook: **Capital Regional District**

Visit our website:

[www.crd.bc.ca/livegreen](http://www.crd.bc.ca/livegreen)



For more tips on how to live green in your yard & garden, visit [www.crd.bc.ca/livegreen](http://www.crd.bc.ca/livegreen)

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