



Waterfacts 2

Choosing the right irrigation system.

There are two basic methods of irrigation: an automatic system or manual. Choosing the system best suited to you depends on several factors. Review the following points to help your decision making process.

Manual: A hose end sprinkler is the least expensive method of watering your lawn both in initial cost and in maintenance. However this method does lack convenience (you need to monitor the sprinkler at all times) and it requires more physical labour as the sprinkler must be moved at the correct times to ensure that over watering does not occur.

Automatic: If moving your sprinkler around your property does not appeal to you, consider installing an automatic irrigation system. There are two basic types of automatic irrigation systems, micro/drip (shrubs, trees, and flower and vegetable gardens) and in-ground. Here are a few points to keep in mind when making a decision.

Type of Landscape: If your property has a significant turf area, then the in-ground irrigation system may be effective. If the largest part of your property is landscaped with plantings, and a small portion of your property has turf or grassy areas, the micro/drip system may be the best solution for your needs. If your property has a large turf area, and a large area of plantings, a combination of the two types of systems may be the best solution. (Remember; always separate lawns, trees, shrubs and vegetable gardens on different irrigation zones.)



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Budget: An automatic irrigation system costs more to design, install, operate and maintain than a manual system and there is also a likelihood of increased water costs to consider.

Physical capability: Manual irrigation requires more physical labour than an automatic system.



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Whichever watering delivery system you choose, ensure it runs at maximum efficiency by programming irrigation controllers properly, adjusting the program regularly, installing a rain shut-off device or soil moisture sensor and maintaining your system on a regular basis. Also ensure that lawns are on a zone or zones separate from the rest of your plantings.

If you are considering hiring a contractor to do the design and/or installation of a new system or maintaining a system, ensure they are certified by the Irrigation Industry Association of BC. Call or write for a copy of CRD's choosing an Irrigation Professional fact sheet.

If you are planning to install a new system or would like to learn how to correctly schedule your irrigation controller for efficient use, call to register for one of our free-of-charge CRD sponsored irrigation workshops.



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The content of this fact sheet was reviewed for accuracy by an irrigation professional and a landscape designer.



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