

Water Challenge

Newsletter for the Waukesha Water Conservation Challenge



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Sprinkling In Waukesha

In June of 2007 an article entitled "Lawn Binge" appeared in the Boston Globe as written by a national conservation expert, Amy Vickers. Amy claimed, "America's biggest drinking problem isn't alcohol; It's lawn watering."

Home lawn and landscape irrigation consumes an average of more than 8 billion gallons of water daily. One third of all residential water use in the United States is devoted to irrigation, estimates the US Environmental Protection Agency.

Data as indicated above inspired the Waukesha Water Utility to enact a sprinkling ordinance Waukesha General Ordinance 13.11 in early 2006. The specifics of the ordinance:

- Addresses ending in odd number may sprinkle on Tuesday and Saturday before 9AM or after 5PM
- Addresses ending in even number may sprinkle on Thursday and Sunday before 9AM or after 5PM

Studies of towns in Colorado with sprinkling ordinances have shown that twice-a-week sprinkling can reduce the range between average water use days and peak water use days by 33%. The water use data we have gathered for the Waukesha Water Utility over the last two summers indicates the same water savings are

happening here since Waukesha's residents and businesses rallied behind the ordinance to reduce water usage.

In 2005, the year before sprinkling restrictions took effect; the city used 7.78 million gallons on average each day and peaked at 12.8 million gallons during summer use.

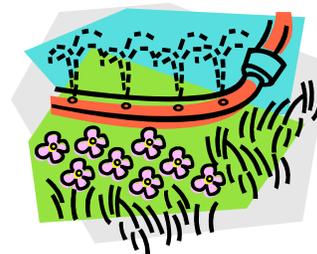
In 2006, the year the sprinkling ordinance went into effect; average daily use fell to 7.18 million gallons and peak day use dropped to 10.2 million gallons.

In 2007, the sprinkling ordinance was in its second year, average daily use was at 7.17 million gallons and peak day use dropped even further to 9.8 million gallons.

This reduction in usage has had a positive affect on our aquifers and our available radium compliant water quantities.

Refrigerator magnets highlighting the sprinkling ordinance will be mailed to residents in their April, May and June water bills.

Keep up the good work and encourage your neighbors to help us with our efforts.



Clean Cars — Clean Water

Clean cars and clean water—can these things really go together? Yes, they can! There are two ways to wash your car in the summer months that won't pollute our rivers and streams. First, you can use the car wash. The car wash is connected to the sewage treatment plant, so the dirty water is treated and cleaned before heading back into the environment.



Second, you can wash your car at home—on the lawn—not the driveway. When you wash your car on the lawn, all the dirty water and soap filter into the soil where they are quickly cleaned by soil

organisms and bacteria. Washing your car on the driveway results in all the dirty water, soap and grime from your car flowing down the driveway and into the nearest storm drain. Once it enters the storm drain, it is on a direct path to the nearest river, stream or wetland.

So here is a great conservation tip for you. This summer, wash your car on the lawn and skip the lawn watering—you just did that and cleaned your car too!

Help keep the river clean and conserve water this summer-- watch where you wash.



Water Challenge

Save Water! Save Money! Win Prizes! Have Fun!

Waukesha Water Utility Phone: 262-521-5272

115 Delafield Street Email: contactus@waukesha-water.com

Waukesha, WI 53186 Web: <http://www.ci.waukesha.wi.us/WaterUtility/whatyoucandotohelp.html>

Outdoor Water Saving Tips

General Tips

- **Avoid over watering** your lawn and plants. According to UW-Extension guidelines, an established lawn only needs 1 inch of water per-week during dry periods to stay in prime condition. During the driest and hottest weeks of summer your lawn may go dormant and turn brown. If you can live it, so can your lawn which will green up again when the weather turns damp again (as it always seems to do in Southeast Wisconsin!).
- **Limit lawns to functional spaces** so you never need to worry about watering or mowing those frustrating "tight-spots" again.
- **Choose the right plants.** Native plants (plants that were in Waukesha before the city was here) require little to no watering because they have adapted over thousands of years to the local climate.
- **Mulch your planting beds,** trees and gardens, Mulch helps retain soil moisture which reduces the need for irrigation.
- **Let the grass grow.** Keep the lawn at least 2.5 inches and (just as important) never remove more than 1/3 of the leaf tissue during any one mowing.

More lawn watering tips

- **Irrigate in the morning** to minimize evaporation in the hot afternoon sun and wind. Regular evening lawn watering is not recommended because it can lead to grass disease problems.
- **Do a deep soak** one time each week instead of light watering several times

a week. Once a week watering promotes deep root growth and reduces water loss.

- **Purchase an automatic timer** for your lawn sprinkler. Set it to automatically shut off after a desired application. To determine the period it takes your sprinkler to lay down the recommended one-inch of water simply set several containers with a one-inch mark under your sprinkler and time how long it takes them to fill up to the mark.
- **Use a drip hose** to water planting beds and gardens. A drip hose gets the water where the plants need it, at the roots.

Other tips

- **Stop leaks!** Replace leaky hoses, nozzles and outdoor spickets.
- **Don't be a hoser.** Use a broom or leaf blower to clean your driveway and sidewalks.
- **Cover swimming pools.** Evaporation alone can remove hundreds of gallons per month from an uncovered swimming pool. A cover can cut this loss by 90%.
- **Capture and recycle rain water** when possible. Place a rain barrel or two beneath your downspouts. A one inch rain falling on a 500 square foot section of roof produces over 200 gallons of water you can capture and use for later watering.



The Waukesha Water Conservation Coalition

In 2006, Waukesha Mayor, Larry Nelson, and County Executive, Dan Vrakas, called for a coalition dedicated to Water Conservation in Waukesha County. The coalition consists of environmental groups, county, city and municipal leaders, the Waukesha Water Utility, college and school officials, scientists, engineers, attorneys, the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District and private individuals. All share the common desire to conserve and protect Waukesha County's critical resource . . . Water.