

Here is some general guideline information on proper lawn watering & mowing. It's long, but read over the entire thing to get an idea of what were trying to accomplish with the watering.

(1) always water early in the a.m. and have it finish up by 5:00-5:30 a.m. so that it soaks into the soil before the sun can evaporate it. It's cool now, but in the heat of the summer, it really makes a difference when you water and you won't have to turn your system off the morning we are coming, as it will be finished up before we come!

(2) as a rule of thumb, its better to water for longer periods of time (**anywhere from 1 to 2 hours per zone**), depending on **a**) sprinkler output, **b**) air temperature and **c**) soil type but then leave anywhere from **2 to 3 days in between (depending on the time of year)** to dry out the top layer, and force the root zone of the lawn to dive down to get to where the water is, thus establishing a **longer, stronger root zone**. The amount of time you have to water is **very dependent on your sprinkler out put**, as some sprinkler systems have very little water pressure, and they need to water longer than sprinklers that have a heavy output. You can out small dishes or empty cans (all have to be the same size or circumference) around the lawn, and run your system until there is approx. 1" of water in each. This is generally the amount you want to eventually put down each time you water. **(This is also a good way to see if sprinklers are adjusted properly, according to the depths of each can after a watering... if some are empty, some are 1/2 full and some are full, you need to adjust until all fill up at the same rate!)** You can then adjust your watering times according to this.

Here is a sample sprinkler system setup for times...

- 1) start out watering 20-30 min (per zone) (once a week) (40-60 degree air temp in Early Spring)
- 2) in 3-4 weeks (depending on air temps) bump to 45 min-1 hr (per zone) (once a week) (Late Spring 60 degrees+)
- 3) if the lawn is draining well, 1.5 hours-2 hours (per zone) (2 times a week) (Early Summer 75 degrees +)
- 4) Three times a week may be needed during 85-100 degrees (Mid Summer) for about 8 weeks, as it is so hot!
- 5) as temps start to cool off, drop a day to 2 times a week, keep the watering times the same (Early Fall 60-70 degrees)
- 6) then to once a week keeping the watering times the same (Late Fall 40-50 degrees)
- 7) then turning off water around the 2nd to 3rd week in October, weather dependant.

The front & the back yard can be watered on different days, so you don't have to get all the watering done in one night!

The key is to train your roots that may be shallow now, to go after that deep watering. That has to be done slowly, as roots don't grow very fast. Most lawns are used to shallow, frequent watering, and their root zones are really close to the surface because of this, but these lawns are **the first ones to dry out as soon as it gets hot**. The biggest key is to make sure to water in the early a.m. and finish up before the sun hits the lawn. Remember, that watering only 10-15 minutes at a time, in the heat of the summer, extends only 1/2 to 1 inch into the soil, and moss and shallow rooted weeds love this! **We want to get the water 5-6 inches down, and then leave time in between to force those roots down!**

(3) Also, remember to raise your mower up to between **3 1/2"-4" during the growing season**. This is the most important thing you can do for your lawn. (**1st cut of the year can be short, 1" - 1 1/2"**, to get up winter debris and shock the lawn into growing, and the **last cut of the year needs to be shorter so the lawn doesn't matt over with snow pack**).

(4) Keeping the blade sharp is also very important to keep the grass blade tops from tearing off. (most people sharpen their mower blade once a year, but they usually need to be sharpened at least 2 times a summer) All these things are tied together to having a thick, green, healthy lawn.

If you have any questions, please e-mail anaturalsolution@msn.com or call 226-2122.

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