

## **Frequently Asked Questions Outdoor Water Use in Gwinnett County**

Updated June 2, 2011

### **I heard I can water my yard every day. Is that true?**

Yes. As of December 1, 2010, state law allows Citizens in Georgia to water any day of the week, regardless of your address, but only between the hours of 4:00pm and 10:00am.

### **Can I wash my car or pressure wash my house any day, too?**

No. Everyday water use is only allowed for landscaping. The old odd/even schedule remains in place for all other outdoor uses. Even and unnumbered addresses may use water outdoors for cleaning, recreation, etc. on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays; odd addresses may use water for these activities on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays.

### **If I water with a hose instead of a sprinkler, can I only water before 10:00am or after 4:00pm?**

No. Hand watering with a shut-off nozzle is allowed any time of the day, any day of the week.

### **What if I put in new landscape? Do I have to water between 4:00pm and 10:00am?**

No. Newly installed landscape is also exempt from the hourly restrictions for the first 30 days following installation. However, 4:00pm to 10:00am is still the most efficient time to water outdoors. During the heat of the day, sun and wind can cause up to 50 percent of the water to evaporate before it is absorbed by plants.

### **What about drip irrigation?**

Drip irrigation is highly efficient and therefore completely exempt from the outdoor rules. It may be used any day, any time.

### **Are parks included in the new schedule?**

Sports fields and parks are exempt from the hourly restrictions. These areas may be watered any time, any day of the week.

### **What if a professional pressure washes my house? Does it have to be on the odd/even schedule?**

No. Commercial businesses are exempt from day of the week restrictions.

### **What are some other exemptions to the hourly restrictions?**

- Commercial agriculture
- Alternative sources of water (grey water, rain water, condensate, etc.)
- Irrigation of food gardens
- Soaker hoses
- Water from a private well
- Irrigation of plants for sale
- Installation and maintenance of irrigation systems
- Hydroseeding

### **Can I have a charity car wash on any day regardless of the address?**

No. Unfortunately, charity car washes, like at home carwashes, are subject to the odd/even schedule. This is determined by the address of the facility hosting the car wash. Of course,

partnering with a professional car wash is exempt from the odd/even schedule because of their professional exemption. It is also a best practice for saving both water quality and quantity.

### **Watering your landscape efficiently**

Although residents may water their landscapes every day, it is best practice to water landscapes only when needed. Irrigation should supplement rainfall. Ideally, most established landscapes in periods of limited rainfall should only need to be watered deeply once a week. The reasonable use of water resources is essential to this region. Use the step test and visual inspection to determine if your plants and grass need to be watered. Also, please keep in mind that tiered water rates may apply to usage. Please review Water Resources' [rates and fee schedule](#) prior to watering.

#### **The step test:**

1. Place your foot firmly on your turf area
2. Watch how quickly the turf springs up to cover your footprint
3. If the turf springs up immediately (a few seconds) your turf is probably not in need of watering
4. If the foot print remains or the turf slowly rises to eventually recover, your turf is in need of a deep watering

#### **Visual inspection**

Check plants in the early morning or late evening. Plants checked in the heat of the day will always appear to need water.

If the plant is wilting, yellow or grayish in appearance, has dried edges, browning, or loss of flowering, the plant is probably in need of water.