



Frequently Asked Questions Outdoor Water Use in Gwinnett County

Updated September 7, 2017

Drought Response Level I

This FAQ is designed to provide the answers to common questions about Outdoor Water Use during a **Drought Response Level I**. There are some exemptions to the general rules stated below. For specific details on these rules, visit <http://rules.sos.ga.gov/gac/391-3-30>

What are the rules for watering landscaping (grass, groundcover, trees, shrubs and other plants) at my home?

- Watering with an irrigation or sprinkler system is allowed any day, before 10 a.m. and after 4 p.m.
- Hand watering with a shut-off nozzle is allowed any time.
- Drip irrigation is highly efficient and is allowed any time.

Can I water newly installed landscaping (grass, groundcover, trees, shrubs and other plants) at my home?

Yes, newly installed landscaping can be watered at any time for the first 30 days following installation. Even during the first 30 days, watering between 4:00 p.m. to 10:00 a.m. is still recommended as the most efficient time. 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. At the end of the 30 days, the rules for existing landscaping will apply.

What about my food garden?

Personal food gardens can be watered at any time.

Can I wash my car? Can I pressure-wash my house or driveway?

Yes. Drought Response Level I does not place any restrictions on personal outdoor water use that is not related to landscaping. Charity, or non-commercial fundraiser, car washes are also allowed.

Are ornamental water features, such as fountains and waterfalls, allowed to operate? Yes, ornamental water features may operate during a Drought Response Level I.

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Can golf courses, parks and athletic fields water their landscaping (grass, groundcover, trees, shrubs and other plants)? Yes, these facilities are allowed to water at any time.

Are there any outdoor water uses that are allowed without restrictions?

- Commercial agriculture
- Alternative sources of water (grey water, rainwater, condensate, etc.)
- Water from a private well
- Irrigation of plants for commercial sale
- Installation and maintenance of irrigation systems
- Hydro seeding

Does my landscaping (grass, groundcover, trees, shrubs and other plants) need to be watered every day?

Most established landscaping should only need to be watered deeply once a week. Use the step test and visual inspection (described below) to determine if your plants and grass need to be watered.

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.

Please visit our [Conserving Water Outdoors](#) page for more information.