

## Use less water to keep your grass green!

We use a great deal of water to maintain green grass in the summer. In the “land of 10,000 lakes”, why does it matter how much water we use? Despite the seemingly abundant water resources in Minnesota, water shortages do exist. As the population and demand for water grows in our state, we need to change our patterns of water use to prevent more severe shortages from occurring. A good place to start is in our yards. Over-watering and evaporation can cause half of all water put on lawns to be wasted. Below are a few easy things you can do to conserve water in your yard, save money on your water bill, and still have a healthy lawn.

- **Properly place your sprinklers.** Place your sprinklers and adjust flow levels so water does not land on hard surfaces. Water that falls on driveways, streets and sidewalks is wasted, and the excess water washes pollutants into stormdrains that flow directly to our rivers and lakes.
- **Water early in the morning.** Heat and wind cause water to evaporate into the air instead of absorbing into the ground. By watering before 9 AM, when it is cooler and less windy, you can save a substantial amount of water.
- **Water deeply and infrequently.** Deep, infrequent watering encourages grass to grow longer, healthier roots. Grass with long roots requires less water and is more drought resistant in the heat of the summer.
- **Use a rain gauge.** Lawns typically only need one inch of water per week, including rainfall. Place a rain gauge, or even a small can, in your yard to monitor the amount of rainfall and sprinkler water reaching the ground. Only water your grass if there has been less than an inch of rain in a week.

For more information on lawn care visit: [www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/horticulture/DG2364.html](http://www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/horticulture/DG2364.html)

-This article was brought to you by the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization



One of the best things you can do for your trees is to place mulch around the trunk. Mulch not only creates a manicured look, it also keeps the soil moist (reducing the need to water), protects the roots and trunk, and reduces weeds. Apply mulch in a ring at least 4 to 6 feet in diameter around the base of the tree and not more than 2 to 4 inches deep. Pull mulch several inches away from the tree to expose the base of the trunk and prevent rot. (Photo: J. Winkelman, MWMO)