

Do you know that the **regional population of 5 million is expected to double by 2060**? In 2005, Fort Worth was the fastest growing city in the US. Our population is growing but our water resources are not.

A Fort Worth Star-Telegram article stated that the **Metroplex has the highest per-capita water use in Texas and is expected to have the greatest need for water** in additional years. According to the City of Fort Worth Water Department, **outdoor watering accounts for 40% - 60% of water consumption** during the summer months! Most of this consumed water is due to poor watering practices. And that's our drought period when we should be conserving water.

State statistics reflect that the average per-capita water demand of **Fort Worth residents is 214 gallons a day, compared to San Antonio's average of 147 gallons and the national average of 171 gallons a day.**
http://www.texaswatermatters.org/pdfs/news_09.pdf

To address this problem, the City of Fort Worth established a Water Conservation Ordinance. On December 4 of this year, City Council passed a **new ordinance that mandates outdoor watering restrictions the entire year between the hours of 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.** This means that no outdoor watering is allowed between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m., except by hand or soaker hose. Violations of this ordinance include watering during prohibited hours, waste by improperly maintained sprinkler systems, broken or misaligned heads or watering during precipitation. Rain & freeze sensors are required on all irrigation systems installed after June 1, 2007.

The Parks & Community Services Department has some suggestions to help you conserve water & still maintain a beautiful landscape.

IRRIGATION

- **Water Deeply:** Water your newly planted tree deeply once a week until it is established. This will promote deep root growth. Do not water it several times a week, because this will cause the roots to stay shallow. Also, the tree will be less drought-resistant if it's receiving water daily.
- **Water Slowly:** Water slowly for better absorption. This will prevent the water from running off.
- **Water Early:** Water early in the morning to reduce wasteful evaporation.
- **Irrigation:** If your landscape is irrigated, put your trees on a separate zone with efficient bubblers. Trees do not need to be watered in the same manner as a lawn.
- **Avoid Watering the Street:** Make sure your sprinklers are directed at your lawn & not the street or your driveway. Remember, when you're watering your lawn, you're using the region's drinking water! So don't waste it!
- **Rainwater Harvesting:** Set up a rainwater barrel to collect the rain from your roof. Put your gutters to more efficient use by collecting the rainwater

& using it on your landscaping! If you have a window unit air conditioner, you can even collect water from it for your plants! Or you can direct your gutter downspouts to your tree or other landscaping.

Forestry is setting up a 10,000 gallon rainwater harvesting system to provide supplemental watering for our 5 gallon container trees that we provide free of charge through our Neighborhood Tree Planting Program.

- **How Much Water Do I Feed my Tree?** Water your newly planted trees 7 gallons per caliper inch.
- **Check for Irrigation Leaks:** Make sure your irrigation system is functioning properly by conducting regular checks for leaks or other damage.
- **Don't Over-water:** Over-watering kills as many plants as under-watering.

FERTILIZATION/MAINTENANCE

- **Mulch:** Create a mulch ring around your tree & keep 2 - 3 inches of mulch in the ring. Mulch slows evaporation, keeps the moisture in the soil for longer, and keeps the soil warm or cool - depending upon the season.
You can get free mulch from the City of Fort Worth at the Rolling Hills Tree Farm located at 2525 Joe B. Rushing Boulevard, just north of the TCC South campus.
- **Don't Rake:** Leave lower branches on trees and shrubs and allow leaf litter to accumulate on top of the soil. This keeps the soil cooler and reduces evaporation. And the leaves break down to add organic matter to your lawn - acting as a fertilizer.
- **Use Compost Instead of Fertilizer:** Fertilizer increases the tree's intake of water. Compost adds nutrients, while at the same time providing insulation for soil moisture & temperature.

YOUR LANDSCAPE

- **Choose Native Trees:** Select native & drought-tolerant trees for your landscape. Native trees are adapted to our climate & weather and are drought-tolerant. They require watering to get established, but afterwards, they can survive without special considerations.
- **Choose the Right Tree for the Soil:** Some trees are pickier about the soil, so when selecting a tree, make sure it can tolerate the soil in your landscape.
- **Group Plants:** Group plants with the same watering needs together to get the most out of your watering time.
- **Don't Mow your Grass too Short:** Keeping some height on your lawn will help hold moisture in your landscape & thus make more water available for your trees!

The Parks & Community Services Department encourages you to implement these water-saving tips on your outdoor landscape. Pitch in & help conserve water. It helps our entire region!