

How To Assess Current Irrigation



- It is important to assess your current irrigation to get a picture of what is working or not working and to determine water efficiency and needs.
- Use the following as a guide.

You'll need the following:

- Straight sided cans (tuna cans)
- Calculator
- Ruler

Let's get started

Current System Checklist

- Turn on and assess each zone of your system. Use the table below to record any irrigation issues

Zone	Broken Heads	Over Spray	Obstructed Spray	Low Output	Excessive Misting	Comments
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						

Catch Can Test

The catch can test can be used to check how much water you are applying, and make sure your sprinklers are as efficient as possible.

1. Place a number of straight sided cans (canned vegetables, tuna, etc.) randomly on the lawn area
 - The greater the number of cans, the greater the test accuracy.
2. About 5 or 6 cans per 500 square feet of lawn area is fine.
3. Run your sprinklers for their normal time period.
4. Take a ruler and measure the depth of water in each can.
5. Add the inches or fraction of inches in each can and divide by the number of cans.
6. Use the chart on the next page to record your findings.
7. Once you know what your sprinkler output is, adjust sprinklers to meet your plants water needs. Natives need less water than other plants. The most efficient way to water them is to use a drip irrigation system or to water by hand. Once established, natives and other climate appropriate plants need little supplemental water.

Zone #	1	2	3	4	5	6
Time (min)						
Catch Can Depth (in) (enter data for multiple cans)						
Total water in cans (in)						
Average water (in) = Total water ÷ # of cans						
Application Rate (in/min) = Average (in) / Time (min)						
Application Rate (in/hr) = Application Rate (in/min) x 60						

- Application Rate is used to determine irrigation frequency (how often you need to water) and duration (how long to water).
- Application duration (min) = Amount Required (in) ÷ Application Rate (in/min)

The tables on page 3 show recommended application duration per week based on the application rate calculated above.

Example:

How many minutes per week should be applied to a warm season lawn located in Pasadena (Inland Valley), given an application rate of 1.0 in/hr, during the month of July?

Answer: 83 minutes

Set your controller to turn on for 21 minutes, 4 times per week.

$21 \times 4 = 84$ minutes per week

Determine how many minutes you should irrigate each week based on your lawn type and application rate from the tables provided on page 3.

With current water restrictions you will quickly see that it is impossible to water turf enough to keep it alive. To comply with utility company regulations, reduce or eliminate the turf in your landscape.



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Region 9: Southern California Coast

Warm Season Turf					Cool Season Turf				
Minutes per week to irrigate if application rate (in/hr) is:					Minutes per week to irrigate if application rate (in/hr) is:				
	0.5	1.0	1.5	2.0		0.5	1.0	1.5	2.0
Jan	44	22	15	11	Jan	59	29	20	15
Feb	57	28	19	14	Feb	76	38	25	19
Mar	63	32	21	16	Mar	84	42	28	21
Apr	76	38	25	19	Apr	101	50	34	25
May	88	44	29	22	May	118	59	39	29
Jun	95	47	32	24	Jun	126	63	42	32
Jul	107	54	36	27	Jul	143	71	48	36
Aug	95	47	33	24	Aug	126	63	42	32
Sep	82	41	27	20	Sep	109	55	36	27
Oct	69	35	23	17	Oct	92	46	31	23
Nov	50	25	17	13	Nov	67	34	22	17
Dec	38	19	13	9	Dec	50	25	17	13

Region 10: Southern California Inland Valleys

Warm Season Turf					Cool Season Turf				
Minutes per week to irrigate if application rate (in/hr) is:					Minutes per week to irrigate if application rate (in/hr) is:				
	0.5	1.0	1.5	2.0		0.5	1.0	1.5	2.0
Jan	42	21	14	10	Jan	56	28	19	14
Feb	57	28	19	14	Feb	75	38	25	19
Mar	80	40	27	20	Mar	106	53	35	27
Apr	96	48	32	24	Apr	128	64	43	32
May	119	60	40	29	May	159	80	53	40
Jun	144	72	48	36	Jun	193	96	64	48
Jul	165	83	55	41	Jul	221	110	74	55
Aug	155	77	52	39	Aug	207	103	69	52
Sep	124	62	41	31	Sep	165	82	55	41
Oct	88	44	29	22	Oct	117	59	39	29
Nov	54	27	18	14	Nov	73	36	24	18
Dec	42	21	14	10	Dec	55	28	19	14