

## STRATEGIES OF SUMMER LAWN WATERING

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Only about 50 percent of the homeowners in San Antonio provide supplemental irrigation to their landscapes; most people rely on rainfall to water their lawn. If you do water your lawn, you have a special responsibility to do it efficiently. Here are some hints that will help you minimize the amount of water you use on the landscape. Use one of the following watering strategies:

- Only irrigate the grass when it needs it. Turfgrass shows a slight color change when it is time to water. Another test is to walk across the lawn and if the footfalls spring back, it indicates that the lawn does not need water.
- Water the lawn according to the average ET (evapo-transpiration) requirements. During the summer it takes .75 inch per week for St. Augustine and zoysia in the sun. St. Augustine and zoysia in the shade require .50 inch per week, as does Bermuda grass in the sun. Buffalo grass in the sun requires about .38 inch per week or .75 inch every two weeks.
- Water according to actual ET recommendations. In San Antonio they are published every Saturday in the "SA Life" section of the San Antonio Express-News. In the fall, spring and winter, very little water is required.
- Apply only enough water to keep the grass alive. For St. Augustine grass, that means about ½ inch of water every two weeks in the summer. Zoysia, Bermuda and buffalo grass can go dormant until the rains green up the lawn.