

Shelly's Landscape Contractors, Incorporated

1617 Techny Road
Northbrook, IL 60062



Office: 847-291-1824
Fax: 847-291-1826

gary@shellyslandscape.com
shelly@shellyslandscape.com
www.shellyslandscape.com

Dear Valued Customer:

PLEASE DO NOT THROW OUT THIS LETTER. AFTER READING, PLACE IN YOUR IRRIGATION CLOCK BOX OR NEAR YOUR WATERING PRODUCTS AND KEEP FOR REFERENCE.

Does your lawn have irregular yellow patches that don't appear to be growing? Do your evergreens appear yellow with little or no growth? Do other plants appear to be struggling? These are classic signs of over watering and you might not be aware you are doing it. By now, most of your irrigation systems have been turned on and whether you know it or not, your irrigation contractors may have set up your timer incorrectly. Usually they set the system to run frequently for short periods of time. If this is the case, now is the time to check and you might need to make some adjustments.

By watering frequently, the plants, and your lawn develop shallow root systems that become very susceptible to temperature and moisture fluctuations. As a result, they tend to develop stress conditions very easily. Lawns that receive too much water will generally begin to show signs of fungus and might begin to deteriorate as the summer progresses. Plant material might begin to yellow and decline and possibly even die from too much water.

If your plants have been established for more than two seasons, they should not require regular irrigation. Take this letter and go out to your clock and set according to the following recommendations:

- Your lawn should be watered **ONCE PER WEEK!**
- The pop-up mist heads should be set to run for 30 minutes.
- The rotary heads should run for 1 hour.
- These are per section times.
- The system should turn on so that the last section is done watering by 8:00 am. This means that you add the number of zones and the times for each zone and work backwards from 8:00am. to calculate the start time.
- The zones that run in your plant beds should be **TURNED OFF.** (Unless they are newer plants, then consult your plant installer).
- The only time your plants should be watered is if they appear wilted in the early morning or later in the evening. Many plants will wilt in the heat of the day to conserve energy.



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What if I don't have an irrigation system? Well consider yourself somewhat lucky because you probably are not overwatering! If you use a manual sprinkler, here are some guidelines to follow:

- Set out a sprinkler and let it run until it delivers 2" of water. You can use a graduated coffee can ½ way out from the sprinkler to get an idea of how long that will take. Different sprinklers will apply different rates of water. This letter should serve as an annual reminder and be kept!

Here are some easy tips to take to determine if your lawn requires water:

- Take 10-12 easy paced steps into the body of your lawn
- Turn around and look at your footsteps
- If your footsteps are still laying flat with no rebound of the grass blades, your lawn needs water and you should irrigate as described above
- If your footsteps begin to disappear and the grass blades are rebounding, the lawn has adequate moisture and no watering is required
- You can also look at your lawn, if it has a general gray cast to it, uniformly and not splotchy, most likely your lawn is dry and you should then do the step above to confirm
- If you notice irregular, spotty brown patches, your lawn could be infested with a variety of fungus and you should contact us prior to irrigating to confirm, more water during hot, humid weather will only make matters worse!!

Here is a simple tip to determine if your plants require water:

- First thing in the morning, look at the leaves on your plants, if they appear droopy and sad, the plant needs water, it's as simple as that!
- Do not evaluate plants mid-day or before the sun goes down, some plants will droop/wilt to conserve energy so if a plant looks wilted, wait until after the sun goes down or early morning. If the plant is no longer wilted, it has adequate moisture
- Note: Evergreens are a bit more difficult to evaluate since they don't have traditional leaves and don't really show signs of wilting. A good rule of thumb is that if your evergreens are located by leafy plants that need water, most likely, they do too!



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This letter and these guidelines are meant to be general guidelines. Every property has its own limiting factors and may need to be adjusted accordingly. Smaller sections may require less water, shady areas may not dry out as fast, sloped areas may require more water due to runoff, etc. If you have any questions, please call. Believe it or not, we are relatively familiar with all your lawns and can answer many questions over the phone. If you are not sure how to set your system, please consult your manual or have your irrigation contractor give you a lesson. This is something that you need to know to ensure you are properly watering your lawn and not becoming a victim of the set-and-forget crowd.

Of course, if you need any help with any of the above items, please give us a call, we're here to help so your landscape performs the way it was designed to perform!

Happy Watering!

Gary Dubofsky
President, Shelly's Landscape Contractors, Inc.

