

Appendix F:

Suggested Best Management Practices for the Green Industry

Of the water we use per person, it has been estimated that half of that water goes to the landscape, and of that, as much as half is wasted, or in other words, as much as 25 percent of the total volume of water used for domestic purposes. Summer water usage increases to a peak that is nearly 4 to 5 times more than the typical daily winter consumption, and it is that peak which drives our need to build large infrastructure. By utilizing Best Management Practices in the landscape, whether as a professional or a home or business owner, we can sustain our landscape, reduce dependence on supplemental water and chemicals, while extending the life of existing infrastructure and reducing future costs to the community. Using water more wisely protects this vital, finite resource, improves the health of our landscape, and maintains our quality of life.

All Green Industries

- Educate employees on water quality and conservation practices
- Model and teach water conservation and pollution prevention to customers, the general public, and the industry
- Utilize brooms to clean walks, drives, decks, and other impervious areas
- Avoid watering, whenever practicable, between the hours of 10 am and 6 pm
- Water flowers, shrubs, and trees separately from lawns
- Utilize positive pressure nozzles on all hoses
- If utilizing an irrigation-only meter, stay within irrigation target (see Appendix C)
- If not utilizing an irrigation-only meter, follow the recommended watering schedule (see Appendix A) unless directed to follow Watering Schedule B (see Appendix B)

Landscape and Irrigation Design

- Make wise choices in the design process to how water will be used consciously choose to use it efficiently and wisely
- Select those plants best suited to a particular site, taking into account such things as soil and microclimates
- Group plants together with similar water requirements and design and install irrigation to deliver the appropriate amount of water to each group (i.e., “hydrozoning”); water turf areas separately from other landscaped areas
- Design, install, and maintain irrigation systems to ensure uniform distribution of water
- Limit turf to functional areas, and select the appropriate turf species; use alternative groundcovers where appropriate
- Operate sprinkler heads with the appropriate water pressure to avoid misting; if pressure is too high, install a pressure regulator or pressure regulated heads
- Evaluate soil and improve, if necessary, to promote plant health and maximize water efficiency
- Install a rain shut-off device
- Establish a site-specific water budget

Landscape and Irrigation Maintenance

- Examine irrigation systems to ensure that those systems do not leak and are operating efficiently on a regularly scheduled basis; make needed repairs or adjustments
- Hand water brown or dry spots; don't over-water the entire lawn
- Turn off irrigation systems when wind or rain is forecast
- Mulch flowers, shrubs, and trees to reduce moisture loss due to evaporation, reduce soil loss, suppress weeds, and provide a more uniform soil temperature; avoid using plastic or fiber barriers
- Minimize erosion and control sediment
- Use pesticides, fertilizers, and herbicides responsibly; dispose of unused products properly
- Practice regular maintenance such as weeding and appropriate pruning to maximize plant health; healthy plants are more likely to withstand periods of drought than are plants under stress

Lawn Maintenance

- Adjust or replace sprinkler heads to eliminate over-spray on hardscape, fences, and buildings
- Conduct regularly scheduled water audits of both indoor and outdoor water appliances, features, and plumbing
- Mow lawns to the proper height to maintain turf health, thereby minimizing the need for fertilizer and pesticide application and reducing water usage
- Aerate lawns to reduce compaction and improve nutrient uptake and minimize runoff
- Leave turf clippings on the lawn to increase organic material and to reduce soil temperature and loss to evaporation; recycle and compost when ever possible, disposing of waste so as to minimize negative environmental impacts

Nurseries, Greenhouses and Growers

- Properly irrigate crops with the minimum amount of water waste
- Utilize positive pressure nozzles to hoses and faucets; never leave operating hoses unattended
- Operate to maintain the health of the plants, to conserve water, and to promote water conservation and water resource protection