

# Northern Water's 2010 Landscaping & Watering How-To Series

For improved water efficiency

Wednesdays 12:30-1:15 p.m.

Northern Water headquarters: Berthoud, CO

## April

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- 21 Fix it yourself – save water & money
- 28 Which grass for my lawn?

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- 1 Using less water & still looking good

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\*Indicates intermediate level; all others are basic

Please reserve your spot at these free seminars by calling Veronica Gomez at 970-622-2322 or e-mailing [vgomez@ncwcd.org](mailto:vgomez@ncwcd.org). Walk-ins are also welcome.

### About Northern Water's Irrigation Management Service

As part of Northern Water's mission, an Irrigation Management Service was established in 1981. IMS initially focused on agricultural water conservation.

In 1994 the program was expanded to include a landscape irrigation management component. The intent was to provide practical information to homeowners, industry and landscape professionals on water conservation and related subjects.

Today, the Conservation Gardens area in the backyard of Northern Water's headquarters is part of that mission. The gardens, which include a Xeriscape landscape demonstration, are open to the public and can be toured via cell phone 24/7.



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# Free Landscaping & Watering How-To Series 2010



With the experts at Northern Water

Berthoud, CO

# Northern Water's 2010 Landscaping & Watering How-To Series

Wednesdays 12:30-1:15 p.m., 220 Water Ave., Berthoud, CO

## April 14: Have I been over-watering?

Calculating your irrigation budget from past water billings. Using past gallonage, landscape type & area, & ET to estimate your potential for savings. A must for HOAs with irrigated commons.

## April 21: Fix it yourself – save water & money

What homeowners likely need in their irrigation toolbox. Basic repair tools, tricks from the pros, how to repair common leaks, how to correctly glue PVC pipe, checking & unplugging nozzles, adjusting “arc” on rotor sprinklers, replacing a broken sprinkler head, etc.

## April 28: Which grass for my lawn?

Selecting the right grass for you: benefits of various blue-grasses, fescues, ryegrass, blue gramma, buffalograss, etc. Why consider alternative lawn grasses: lawn water use requirements, maintenance guidelines, etc. Also, where to find seed, how to germinate, etc.

## May 5: How to install & maintain your lawn

Grading for surface drainage, overcoming soil compaction, benefits of pre-tillage & incorporating compost, starter fertilizer, etc. Selecting your grass. Guidelines for laying sod, how to successfully seed a lawn, etc. Mowing height & frequency – catching clippings or mulch mowing. Fertilizing – when & how much. Also, core aeration, weed control, watering guidelines, surviving drought, winterization, etc.

## May 19: The seven principles of Xeriscape

1) Plan & design 2) create practical turf areas 3) select & group plants appropriately 4) improve the soil 5) mulch 6) efficient irrigation & 7) maintain the landscape. Also, some additional design guidelines to conserve water, reduce maintenance, & increase the value of your landscape.

## May 26: Xeriscape II - Water efficient landscapes\*

More detailed information covering the seven Xeriscape principles & more advanced design guidelines for water conservation. Plant selection tips. Benefits of using native plants. Planting guidelines. Maintenance recommendations. Overview of the Colorado Plant Select program.

## June 2: Irrigation guidelines for your home

Types of irrigation systems (sprinkler, micro-spray, drip,

etc.), basic irrigation design principles, major system components, black poly-pipe vs. white PVC, selecting the right sprinkler (rotors, pop-up sprays, multi-stream rotors, etc.), improving sprinkler performance to conserve water, winterizing your system, etc. Types of drip systems. Also, rain gauge location, automatic rain shutoff devices, sprinkler “rain” gauges, hose-end timers, quick soil moisture checks, etc.

## June 9: Home irrigation systems II\*

The next steps. Solving problems with high or low pressure, basic electrical troubleshooting – controllers & solenoid valves, etc. More coverage of drip irrigation systems, including filter selection & maintenance, inserting drip emitters & attaching 1/4” distribution lines, troubleshooting, etc.

## June 16 & July 21: Irrigation scheduling

Using technology to your advantage. Soil-plant-water relationships, zoning similar plants, sprinkler uniformity & precipitation rates, soil infiltration rates, drip system application rates, developing an irrigation schedule, programming an irrigation controller/clock, seasonal ET curve, need for a rain gauge, checking soil moisture, conserving water, etc.

## June 23 & July 28:

### Cost effective water conservation\*

Sprinkler catch can tests, determining sprinkler run times, scheduling irrigations – including use of freeware. Where to obtain ET data. Benefit/cost of a secondary water meter. Determining your water budget & tracking your actual water use. How to make needed adjustments to your irrigation schedule. Additional cost effective tips for conserving water including rain/wind/freeze shutoffs.

## June 30: How to use “smart” controllers\*

Save water & time with weather based or soil moisture based “smart” controllers that automatically adjust irrigations to match the weather. Learn about the science that can make these advanced controllers work for you. Also, water meters, rain gauges, rain/wind/freeze shutoffs, tracking your actual water use, etc. Other cost effective tips for conserving water.

## July 7: Tips for the new homeowner

Landscape & irrigation design guidelines for new construction. Appropriate grouping of plants/turf, size/location of trees, irrigation zones, etc. What kinds of landscape/irrigation design costs more initially & over time? Also, what to look for in builder installed landscaping & sprinkler systems.

## July 14: Too much brown grass?

Dry spots can reveal lack of sprinkler uniformity & a few may be okay. But how can you detect or measure early water

stress in turf in time to avoid widespread brown? Early visual indicators, simple water penetration checks, determining soil moisture by feel, etc. Additional tools: soil moisture sensors (tensiometers, electrical resistance blocks, etc.), plant canopy temperature, etc.

## August 4: Selecting a landscape irrigation contractor

Improving your chances for positive results. What to look for, performance standards, etc. Permits required, etc. General landscape irrigation system standards – what you should expect/require. Know when not to be “too cheap” so you don’t pay for it dearly later on. Common mistakes homeowners make that can increase their costs – now & later.

## August 11: Examples of proper rain gauge installation

Benefits of using a rain gauge. Selecting your rain gauge. How to properly choose a location to install your gauge. Benefits of a rain gauge vs. a rain shutoff device. Effects of location or site on gauge “accuracy,” manual gauges vs. wireless gauges, etc. Some best buys to consider.

## August 18: More shrubs & flowers or just turf?

Environmental benefits of appropriate urban landscapes. Plant selection, maturity, density, mulch – how do they affect water use? Also, benefits of appropriate urban landscapes on physical/emotional health – including environmental big picture benefits. Maybe “fence line to fence line” rock mulch is not the answer.

## August 25: Which turf grasses need less water?

First season results from Northern Water’s lysimeter study – use of 44 weighing lysimeters planted with 11 different turf grasses to directly measure turf water use. Which grasses used the most water & which used the least?

## September 1: Using less water & still looking good

Little adjustments to your irrigation controller that can save big on water. Results from Northern Water’s line source sprinkler study. Which turf grasses look the best with less than optimal irrigation? The choices might surprise you.

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Walk-ins are also welcome.