

## Outdoor Water Conservation

With water conservation efforts under way in Oklahoma, here are some water conservation tips from the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).

Approximately 30 percent of all water piped to residential homes is used outdoors. Much of this use is inefficient, wasting a precious resource. With a little planning we can reduce the amount of water wasted and still have a healthy lawn.

### Outdoor Tips

- Check for leaks in outdoor faucets, pipes and hoses. Slight drips can add up to many gallons of wasted water.
- Water your lawn only when it needs it. A good way to see if your lawn needs watering is to step on the grass. If it springs back, it doesn't need water. If it stays flat, it needs water.
- Avoid watering on windy days. Wind will carry water away from its intended area.
- Water during the coolest part of the day, generally early morning, to avoid excess evaporation and to help prevent the growth of fungus.
- Water your lawn once every 5 to 7 days, wetting the soil to a depth of 6 to 10 inches. This takes 1/2 to 1 inch of water and encourages deep roots that are more drought-tolerant and better able to utilize available soil moisture. Frequent, shallow watering results in shallow roots, making your lawn a prime target for insects, diseases, and temperature extremes.
- Don't water the street. Position your sprinklers so water lands on the lawn or garden, not on paved areas.
- Plant drought-resistant trees, plants and lawn grass. Many beautiful trees and plants thrive with far less watering than other species.
- Put a layer of mulch around trees and plants. Mulch will slow the evaporation of moisture and discourage weed growth.
- Do not permit children to play with the water hose or sprinkler.
- Do not use a constant stream of water when washing the car. Wash from a bucket of soapy water, using the hose only to rinse. Wash less frequently during dry, hot weather.
- Use a broom, not a hose, to clean driveways and sidewalks.

For additional information on this subject please contact your local DEQ representative or the Water Quality Division of the Department of Environmental Quality at (405) 702-8100.

