

Sustainable Landscape & Water Conservation Newsletter

Water Savers

One of the best ways to save water in the landscape is to evaluate shrub watering times; specifically, determine how many minutes each of the irrigation valves operate.

By shrubs, I refer to foreground, foundation, or background plants, not typical ground covers such as vinca, honeysuckle, iceplant, or ivy.

Typically, the shrub areas require 50% less water than turfgrass, especially when the shrub areas are located in low-lying areas next to adjacent lawns. Irrigation runoff alone usually satisfies the water requirements of the shrubs.

Less water means savings in water bills. Less water also results in healthier shrubs which equates to less pesticide use—both “green” and sustainable landscape techniques.

Articles by Wayne Smith, landscape consultant for Oakridge Landscape and the Program Director for the Landscape Technology Certificate Program, Cal Poly University, Pomona.

MULCH

The Best Value in the Landscape

Mulch is simply the best “bang for the buck” in the landscape industry.

Organic mulch is the most logical solution to a sustainable landscape; that is, the debris from prunings and clippings are recycled and returned to the landscape area.

Organic mulch is especially effective for water conservation. Some mulch facts are:

1. Two to four inches of organic mulch, properly aged and processed, is the best value in the landscape.
2. Organic mulch adds nutrients to the soil, improves aeration

and drainage, and promotes microorganisms. The bottom line is: Mulch improves soil fertility.

3. Organic mulch reduces evaporation from the soil, thereby, reducing irrigation water usage, which in turn promotes water conservation. Mulch acts as nature’s insulating blanket, keeping the soil warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer.

4. Organic mulch reduces weed infestation. This decreases the needs for herbicides/chemicals. Mulch can also inhibit certain plant diseases, decreasing the use of chemicals.

5. Organic mulch is aesthetically pleasing and increases property values.



OAKRIDGE
LANDSCAPE, INC.

Los Angeles Office: 818.891.0468
Orange County Office: 714.493.7548