



*Special to the  
Daily Times*

## Water Wisely: July is Smart Irrigation Month

By Clint Allison, *At the Root of It All*

The average American household uses about 30 percent of its water outdoors, while in some parts of the country, this can be as high as 70 percent. Experts estimate that as much as 50 percent of landscape water use goes to waste due to evaporation, wind, or runoff caused by overwatering. Some households lose up to 70 gallons of water each day!

At Rainscapes we are committed to the most efficient use of this precious resource. That's why we have joined with the Irrigation Association to endorse July as Smart Irrigation Month.

Here are some general tips to help effectively manage your water usage, not just this month, but throughout the year:

- **Don't send water down the drain.** Set sprinklers to water plants, not your driveway, sidewalk, patio or buildings.
- **Water only when needed.** Watering too much and too frequently results in shallow roots, weed growth, disease and fungus.
- **Water at the best time.** Watering during the heat of the day may cause losses of up to 30 percent due to evaporation. Prevent water loss by watering when the sun is low or down, winds are calm and temperatures are cool — typically between the evening and early morning.
- **Water more often for shorter periods.** For example, setting your system to run for three, 5-minute intervals lets soil absorb more water than watering for 15 minutes at one time, reducing runoff.
- **Adapt watering to the season.** Familiarize yourself with the settings on your irrigation controller and adjust the watering schedule regularly based on seasonal weather conditions. Or invest in a smart controller so your system can make these changes automatically.

You may be able to upgrade your current irrigation system with a smart controller. Some new components are designed as easy add-ons to existing systems. The new generation of "smart" irrigation controllers monitor weather, soil conditions, evaporation and plant water use and automatically adjust your watering schedule.

Make time this summer to be sure you're getting the most out of your irrigation system, while keeping utility bills low and helping to protect the environment.

Clint Allison of Rainscapes provides more tips and information at [www.rainscapes.com](http://www.rainscapes.com) or call 981-4270.