



Landscape Irrigation Controllers



Residential outdoor water use in the United States accounts for more than 7 billion gallons of water each day, mainly for landscape irrigation. Experts estimate that as much as half of this water is wasted due to overwatering caused by inefficiencies in irrigation methods and systems.

Cutting-edge irrigation control technologies can significantly reduce overwatering by applying water only when plants need it. WaterSense®, a partnership program sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), will help consumers identify weather-based irrigation controllers that can reduce water use in the landscape.

Weather-based irrigation controllers use local weather and landscape conditions to tailor irrigation schedules to actual conditions on the site. Instead of irrigating on a preset schedule set by a clock timer controller, weather-based controllers allow irrigation to more closely match the water requirements of plants. By using weather-based controllers, instead of standard clock timer controllers, homeowners would no longer need to worry about their sprinklers automatically operating when their landscapes don't need water.



End Overwatering

Many homeowners set their irrigation systems to water according to the hottest, driest month of the year, usually July. Throughout the year, the schedule is left untouched, resulting in a system that applies the same amount of water to the landscape in the winter as in the summer. This leads to periods of extreme overwatering.

By using a scheduling system that tracks weather and landscape conditions and schedules irrigation accordingly, weather-based irrigation controllers can reduce water use by 20 percent compared to systems with standard clock timer controllers. If every home with an irrigation system made this switch, we could save 150 billion gallons of water per year across the United States.

Performance Is Key

All products bearing the WaterSense label must be independently tested and certified to ensure they meet EPA's water efficiency and performance criteria. EPA worked with a variety of stakeholders to develop criteria and performance measures for weather-based irrigation controllers, based on the industry's Smart Water Application Technologies protocol for climatologically based controllers.



The WaterSense Draft Specification for Weather-Based Irrigation Controllers includes supplementary features, such as multiple programming capabilities, that controllers must have in order to receive the label. Weather-based irrigation controllers that earn the WaterSense label must demonstrate that they meet the watering needs of a typical landscape, while not overwatering.

Whether you are replacing an older, standard clock timer controller or looking for options to reduce water use and utility bills from your irrigation system, the WaterSense label will soon be able to help you identify weather-based irrigation controller models that are high-performing and water-efficient. For more information, visit www.epa.gov/watersense.