



# OUR GUIDE TO WATERING YOUR NEW LANDSCAPE

## WATERING OBJECTIVES

Thank you for choosing Merrifield Garden Center to install your new landscape plants. It will take at least one year for your new plants to fully establish their roots. During this time, watering correctly is the single most important factor in the success or failure of your new plant.

All plants need water to support their growth. If they do not have enough water, growth stops as they try to conserve resources. If dry conditions persist, this will lead to injury or death. Plants also need oxygen for cellular respiration. When the soil remains soaking wet, this prevents oxygen from reaching the roots and causes plants to die. Our goal is to never allow plants to become completely dry while also avoiding constantly wet conditions.

The watering needs of each plant can vary based on the species, size, growing practices, soil type, temperature, sun exposure and a myriad of other changing conditions. Because of this, it's impossible to provide an exact schedule of how much or how often you'll need to water.

## HOW TO WATER

Established landscape plants have a mature root system that can access water beyond the foliage itself. When it rains, or you water, the plant can find moisture from a broader surface area. New plants, however, have a limited root system that does not extend beyond the width of the plant you see above the ground. When you water new landscape plants, gently shower the root ball and surrounding soil with a watering wand, moving it around until you thoroughly saturate the area.

If you're watering a group of new plants, you can use a sprinkler and run it for 1½ to 2 hours. Since water output varies by brand and type, we recommend checking the soil before and after you water to ensure you thoroughly saturate the root zone and surrounding soil.



## WHEN TO WATER

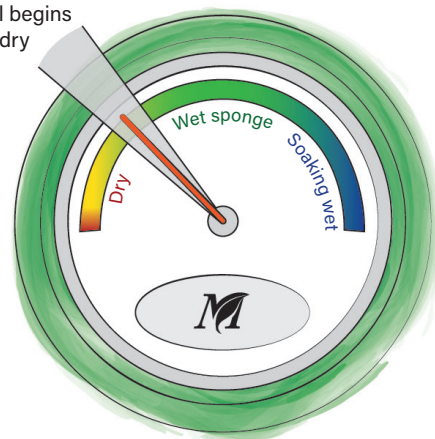
The day your plants are installed, water slowly, deeply and thoroughly so the water gets down deep into the root zone.

For ongoing watering, the only way to know for sure whether your plant needs water is to check the moisture at the root ball. Dig down 4 to 5" and feel the soil at the edge of the root ball with your fingers. If it feels slightly dry, water thoroughly until the root ball and surrounding soil are fully saturated.



We recommend checking the soil for moisture every 3 to 5 days for smaller plants and every 5 to 7 days for larger plants and trees. In the summer when it's hot and dry, check the soil every 2 to 3 days for smaller plants and every 3 to 5 days for larger plants and trees.

Water when the soil begins to feel dry



Scan the QR Code to watch a video on how to water your new landscape.

## HOW MUCH TO WATER

Each time you water, you want to provide enough moisture to thoroughly saturate the root zone and surrounding soil. When you are done, the root ball and surrounding soil should be soaking wet. Don't worry, you cannot overwater your plants in one watering session. Overwatering is caused by watering too frequently.

When you water it's best to gently shower the plants over a longer period of time so the water can soak into the root ball. For example, if you're watering a small to medium shrub (about 3' or less in height) you will want to run your watering wand for 3 to 5 minutes to thoroughly saturate the root zone and surrounding soil. Larger shrubs (3 to 6' tall) will take roughly 5 to 7 minutes, while large evergreens (6 to 8' tall) and trees (up to a 2" caliper) will take 10 to 12 minutes to fully saturate. Very large plants will take 15 minutes or longer to fully saturate the root zone and surrounding soil.

## COMMON QUESTIONS & MISCONCEPTIONS

### **I don't need to water, I have an irrigation system.**

Most irrigation systems provide frequent, light showers of water. This may be suitable for lawns or established plants, but newly planted trees and shrubs need a deep watering directly on the root ball and surrounding soil of the plant. Please continue to check on your new plants as described in these instructions and/or speak with your irrigation contractor on how to best modify your irrigation system to accommodate new plants.

### **It has been raining, so I don't need to water.**

Rain is good, but we often don't get enough to thoroughly saturate new plants. While rain may be enough for your established landscape plants and lawn, you will still need to check your new plants for moisture, and water if the rain did not thoroughly soak the root zone and surrounding soil.

### **Do I need to water in the winter?**

It depends. Deciduous plants shed their leaves and stop growing throughout the winter. Evergreens, however, need to maintain moisture in their leaves and are susceptible to drying out during cold, dry, windy weather. Water all of your plants well in the late fall, before the winter weather sets in. Continue to check on them throughout the winter, especially evergreens, such as arborvitae, hollies, laurels, magnolias, etc., and hand water if they are dry and temperatures are above freezing.

## CARING FOR YOUR NEW PLANTS IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

The plants you've purchased are high quality, healthy and well cared for. Now that they are installed in your landscape, it is your responsibility to keep them beautiful and thriving. Providing the right amount of water, in the right way, is the most important way to achieve this.

We're dedicated to bringing out the best in your garden. Please contact us if you have any questions or you encounter a problem with your new plants. Our Plant Specialists are only a phone call away.

## *Our Landscape Replacement Policy*

We stand behind the quality of our plants, but we can't replace plants that die because they were not watered according to these instructions. If your new trees or shrubs get the attention they need from you, but still fail to survive, we will be happy to replace them at 100% of the purchase price for the first 6 months from the date of purchase, and 50% of the purchase price during the second 6 months from the date of purchase.

All replacements will be issued as store credits. You can apply your store credit toward plants, materials or labor. There are no cash refunds. Naturally, this policy cannot cover damage or death beyond our control, such as over or underwatering, physical damage, insect, wildlife or disease damage, winterkill, or extreme natural conditions, such as droughts. To inquire about a replacement, contact our landscaping team by calling 703-208-2607 or emailing [landscape@mgcmail.com](mailto:landscape@mgcmail.com). Please provide a copy of your invoice or sales receipt.

Please note: Sale plants, roses, houseplants, annuals, perennials and plants that are grown in locations other than "in ground," such as plants that are in containers, are not covered by our replacement policy. Plants covered by this replacement policy will only be replaced one time.



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