



Spring is in the Air!!

Irrigation Season Has Arrived

Magna Water District's (MWD) secondary water system is now available for outdoor watering (as of April 15th) for those who have a secondary connection. Although secondary water connections continue to increase (with current priority for larger users & new development), most of our customers rely on our drinking water system for outdoor irrigation. This is a good time to check sprinkler systems for leaks & prepare turf & planter areas, however it does not necessarily mean it's time to start irrigating. Utah experienced another "dry" winter & our snowpack levels are well below normal. In March, the Governor declared a state of emergency for the ongoing drought conditions. It is very important that irrigation be delayed as long as possible especially during drought years.

Water Conservation & Restriction Levels

In order to respond to worsening drought conditions, MWD has four levels of Water Conservation & Restrictions that the Board of Trustees may impose. MWD is currently in our default *Level 1 Water Conservation* that encourages voluntary conservation through tiered rate structure pricing, conservation information, public outreach, free water audits, & time of day watering recommendations (no watering between 10 am & 6 pm). If drought conditions worsen, the Board may choose to move to *Level 2 Mandatory Water Conservation* which limits how/when irrigation water may be used with time of day &/or days of week limitations with enforcement actions. If drought conditions were to progress even further & threaten water supplies, the next two levels include further restrictions & enforcement actions. *Level 3 Mandatory Water Restrictions* include temporary increases to water rate tier schedules & temporary bans on new lawn installations. *Level 4 Emergency Water Restrictions* include both how/when & how much watering will be allowed.



Information on Conservation Tips & Resources

You can help us stay in our default *Level 1 Water Conservation* by using irrigation water wisely. For more conservation tips & information please take a minute & visit the following websites managed by our water agency partners:



For general water conservation tips visit:

www.slowtheflow.org

For a real-time lawn watering guide visit:

<https://conservewater.utah.gov/guide.html>

To schedule a free water audit visit:

<https://slowtheflow.org/are-you-waterwise/>

To report water abuse visit:

<https://conservewater.utah.gov/watabuse.html>

Landscape Considerations

Many of our customers put a lot of time, effort & money into their landscaping with a goal of lush green grass, thick shrubs, healthy trees, & vibrant flowers. A beautiful yard can be very satisfying but also very frustrating if a lot of money is spent on plants or trees that soon wilt or turn brown & die off. A beautiful yard is achievable without wasting money on replanting or excessive watering. It is important to understand that each yard is unique from the type of soil we are planting in, to the type of water and type of system we use to irrigate. All these factors should be considered before selecting the type of landscaping we choose to plant in our yards. Please turn the page for additional information....

Soil Types

Although we live in a “desert”, soil types in the Salt Lake Valley can vary significantly depending on where you live. Loamy soils are often considered ideal for planting since they contain a good mix of sands, silts, clays & are usually well drained soils rich in organic material & more acidic. These soils are limited in reach however along the east benches & foothills of the valley. In Magna, soil types are generally less rich in nutrients & more alkaline, but still vary from well drained stony loam with light clays or cobbly loamy sands closer to the foothills of the Oquirrh mountains (west & southwest areas) to poorly drained silty clays to silty clay loams with higher salinity closer to the lake bottom (north & north east areas). Many plants & trees are sensitive to these soils which may stunt growth & turn leaves yellow. If you choose the right tree, it can make all the difference. For example, a Flowering Pear tree should do very well in alkaline soils that are poorly drained, where a Flowering Plum tree may struggle.



Water Types

Secondary water is very important to MWD’s long term success. Since it doesn’t require expensive treatment like our drinking water, it is more economical & efficient to use for outdoor watering & will extend our drinking water supply well into the future. Although we’d like to provide secondary water to all customers, our current approach must prioritize customers with large turf areas such as parks, schools, & churches. Most of this water



comes from Utah Lake which is higher in suspended & dissolved solids than our drinking water. It is screened & filtered (300 micron) at the intake off the US&L Canal & blended with shallow well water in our storage reservoirs. Since the water is higher in mineral content (sodium, calcium, & chloride) & more alkaline in nature it can lead to discoloration & build up on leaves which can be toxic to some plants. For example, a water wise shrub such as a Russian Sage or Butterfly Bush should do well with secondary water where Dogwood or Holly may do poorly.



Irrigation System

Utah Lake water has been used successfully for irrigation in the Salt Lake Valley since the pioneers dug canal networks between Utah Lake & Great Salt Lake. Flood irrigation was used to water crops & landscaping. Although this method is inefficient & wastes a lot of water, it does carry one benefit over sprinkled irrigation: the minerals in the water don’t build up on the leaves since the water is applied at the base of the plant which in turn reduces toxicity. Drip irrigation combines the best of both worlds since it is much more efficient & better for conservation than flood irrigation but also applies the water directly to the base of the plant as opposed to sprinklers. It does require additional filters & regular servicing to prevent plugging of the small drip heads when used with secondary water but is highly recommended.



Plant and Tree Selection

We hope this information is helpful & recommend asking a sales associate for guidance when choosing plants from a local nursery or home improvement store. For a more detailed list of “Do’s” & “Don’t’s” (courtesy of Glover Nursery) please visit our website at www.magnawater.com or visit any of the following websites for water wise plant ideas:



For a list of Utah Water-Wise Plants visit:

<https://waterwiseplants.utah.gov/>

For a list of Water-Wise Plants for Utah Landscapes visit:

<https://cwel.usu.edu/water-wise-plants>