

# WATERING NEW TURF GRASS SOD

Water is essential to all life...too little water and we die, too much and we drown. The same is true of the grass in our lawns. Water makes up 70% to 80% of the weight of our lawn grasses and the clippings alone are nearly 90% water. While most people are concerned about not watering their lawns enough, the fact is that more lawns are damaged or destroyed by over-watering. Newly installed turf grass sod has very important watering needs. Proper watering immediately after installation will ensure the turf gets established, and it will also have an impact on how well the lawn continues to flourish for years to come.

Start watering immediately after the sod is installed. A sprinkler should be turned on as soon as there is an area big enough without getting the next soil area wet. It is essential that enough water is put down the first time to thoroughly soak the sod and the soil under the sod. Water each area with about 0.5" of water. It generally takes 30 minutes or more, depending on the time of year and other weather conditions.

After a few hours, pull back one of the corners of the rolls to see if the dirt is moist. If the soil is not damp, water more. You can check the moisture content by lifting a corner of the sod and sticking your finger into the soil. By giving the sod a heavy first watering you will rid the area of air pockets which dry out the sod. If you make deep footprints when walking across your lawn, the sod is almost too wet.

Watch all of the edges of the sod, these edges typically the hardest to keep moist and may need to be watered by hand. After the first watering, water enough to keep the soil under the sod moist, but not muddy. In cool weather this may mean watering only every 3 or 4 days. In warmer weather, you may have to water daily or every other day. Try not to allow the ground to dry out too much between the watering.

After the first couple of weeks you can start to back off of the frequent watering. Remember that frequent shallow watering is not good for your lawn. This can cause the root system to grow near the surface. Water less often, but water deeply. Over time the roots will follow the water down into the soil and you will have lush healthy turf.

