
Watering of Parks and Street Landscapes

Saanich waters 68 boulevards and 72 parks throughout our community. Conserving water while providing healthy landscapes is a key focus.

The Capital Regional District implements Stage 1 Water Restrictions from May 1 to September 30. Saanich takes many steps to conserve water consistent with these regulations each summer.

Q: Why does Saanich water some landscapes?

- High use / high visibility areas provide enjoyment for thousands of residents and visitors each summer. Low priority landscapes are not watered.
- “If a lawn is to be walked or played on frequently, it needs to be watered during the summer months to handle this wear and tear” – *CRD Waterfacts 6 brochure*¹.
- Healthy plants out-compete weeds and other pests. No need to use pesticides.

Q: How does Saanich control water use?

- Many irrigation systems are on a computerized control connected to the University of Victoria (UVic) weather station. The watering program is adjusted automatically to the actual plant water needs, and to the conditions at each site.

Q: How does Saanich reduce water use?

- Watering is done at night, whenever possible.
- Staff repair and adjust sprinklers on a daily basis.
- Sports fields are tested regularly with a digital moisture meter.
- Drip irrigation is used for trees.
- Many floral displays are hand-watered.

Q: Why is there water flowing on the road from street landscaping?

- There may be a broken sprinkler or water line.
- Occasionally, wind pushes the water away from the intended watering area.
- Some locations have minor runoff due to variable conditions in soil and plantings.

Q: Why are you watering during the day?

- Often a timer needs to be reset with the correct time.
- Some parks have a single water source and it takes many hours to water everything.
- Our crews may be testing the lines, and need the water on to ensure all is working properly.

¹ Source: https://www.crd.bc.ca/docs/default-source/water-pdf/waterfacts6_000.pdf?sfvrsn=2 Last viewed July 2015.

Q: What about sports fields?

- Sports fields are played on from fall through spring each year. They are reseeded in the summer.
- Many sports fields are sand-based, and the investment in new grass would be lost without proper watering to match the plant needs.
- Short bursts of irrigation through the day keeps humidity levels up, and grass continues to grow in through the normal dormant summer period.
- Restoring fields each fall would cost tens of thousands of dollars and result in loss of use for a healthy, active part of our community.

Q: How can I help?

- If you see problems with irrigation, including vandalism to sprinkler heads, please let us know by contacting parks@saanich.ca or call 250-475-5522.

Please contact Saanich Parks at 250-475-5522 or parks@saanich.ca if you have any questions or concerns!