

Easy Water Savings

Spruce Up Your System And Save While You Sprinkle

(NAPSA)—Spring may have sprung, but is your sprinkler ready? Before you ramp up your watering this season, it might be time to spruce up your sprinklers to stop wasting water, save money, and promote a healthy lawn or garden.

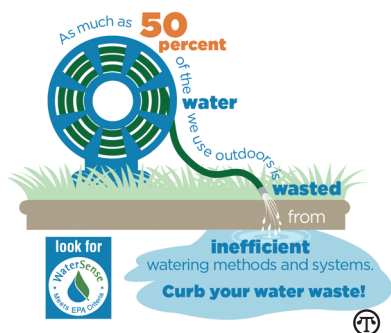
If you have an irrigation system, chances are it has been dormant for the past several months and could use some maintenance to get in shape for the spring and summer growing season. A home with an automatic irrigation system that isn't properly programmed or maintained can waste as much as 30,000 gallons of water annually!

Take a few minutes to check your system for common problems such as leaks or malfunctioning sprinkler heads. In fact, just one broken sprinkler head could waste up to 25,000 gallons of water and more than \$90 over a six-month irrigation season—the cost of about 300 daffodil bulbs.

To get started, follow these four simple steps—inspect, connect, direct and select:

- **Inspect.** Check your system for clogged, broken or missing sprinkler heads. If you're not the do-it-yourself type, go with a pro—look for an irrigation professional certified through a WaterSense labeled irrigation program to help maintain your system.

- **Connect.** Examine points where the sprinkler heads connect to pipes or hoses. If water is pooling in your landscape, you could have a leak in your system. A leak as small as the tip of a ballpoint pen ($\frac{1}{32}$ nd of an inch) can waste about 6,300 gallons of water per month.



You can have a healthy lawn and still save water.

- **Direct.** Experts estimate that as much as half of the water we use outdoors is being wasted due to evaporation, wind or runoff caused by inefficient irrigation methods and systems. Redirect sprinklers to apply water only to your lawn or prized plants, not your driveway or sidewalk!

- **Select.** An improperly scheduled irrigation controller can waste a lot of water. Update your system's schedule with the seasons, or select a WaterSense labeled controller to take the guesswork out of scheduling.

Properly maintained irrigation systems are the key to healthy landscapes and outdoor water savings. So remember to add "sprinkler spruce-up" to your spring-cleaning list this year!

You can learn more about maintaining a water-smart yard, search for a certified irrigation professional, or view a list of WaterSense labeled irrigation controllers by visiting the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's WaterSense website at www.epa.gov/watersense/outdoor.



Editor's Note: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is reminding consumers to spruce up their irrigation systems before they ramp up their watering this spring. Although "sprinkler spruce-up" officially launches the first weekend in May, this story can run anytime after winter ends, to remind readers to inspect, connect, direct and select their way to water savings outdoors.