

# Important Information Regarding Winter Watering

It has recently come to my attention that many of the HOA's in Parker have been approached by landscape maintenance companies regarding winter watering. As this has been a very dry fall and winter, this is a great idea, but it is important that it be done correctly. The one thing you should NOT do is activate your sprinkler system to accomplish this task.

To help keep your trees and shrubs healthy throughout the winter, follow these easy guidelines from Colorado State University:

*In much of Colorado, winters can have extended warm, dry, windy spells. Warm winters without snow appeal to people, but cause winter drought. Trees and shrubs at risk from dry winters include recent transplants, evergreens and shallow rooted species such as lindens, birches, and Norway and silver maples.*

*Water plants when the leaves start to fall in the autumn to send them into winter with adequate soil moisture. For recent transplants, a soil needle can be used on low water pressure for one minute at each site to water the root ball and surrounding soil. Make injections in a grid pattern one foot apart and nine to 18 inches deep.*

*Frog-eye type lawn sprinklers can be used to water established trees and shrubs. The most important area to water is from the edge of the branches halfway to the trunk, and the area two to three times that distance out from the edge of the branches. Allow sprinklers to run 30 minutes at each setting.*

*Monitor weather and soil conditions from November through March. Generally, if four weeks elapse without snow cover, water plants and trees again during these months when temperatures are above freezing and the soil is not frozen. Water early in the day so the water can soak into the ground before freezing nighttime temperatures.*

*Remember to disconnect and drain hoses after use. Don't activate sprinkler systems during the winter.*

I would also suggest you check your soil moisture levels prior to initiating any watering. Dig down 3" to 6" in the area where you are considering watering. If the soil at the bottom of the hole holds together when you pinch it, or feels moist, there may be no need to water.

For more information, visit the Colorado State University website, <http://www.ext.colostate.edu/>. Also feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions.

Craig R. Miller  
Water Efficiency Specialist  
Parker Water and Sanitation District  
[cmiller@pwsd.org](mailto:cmiller@pwsd.org)

303.841.2058