

# Drought-resistant lawns

Grass Artwork courtesy of St. Johns River Water Management District



People who turn on their sprinklers for a short while each day are keeping only the top few inches of soil wet. Their plants develop shallow roots to use this water at the soil surface. But what happens when water is not available for a few days?

## Water deeply and infrequently

A much better strategy is to water deeply and infrequently. This forces plants to develop their roots downward, forming an expansive deepreaching root ball. This makes for a healthy drought-resistant lawn.

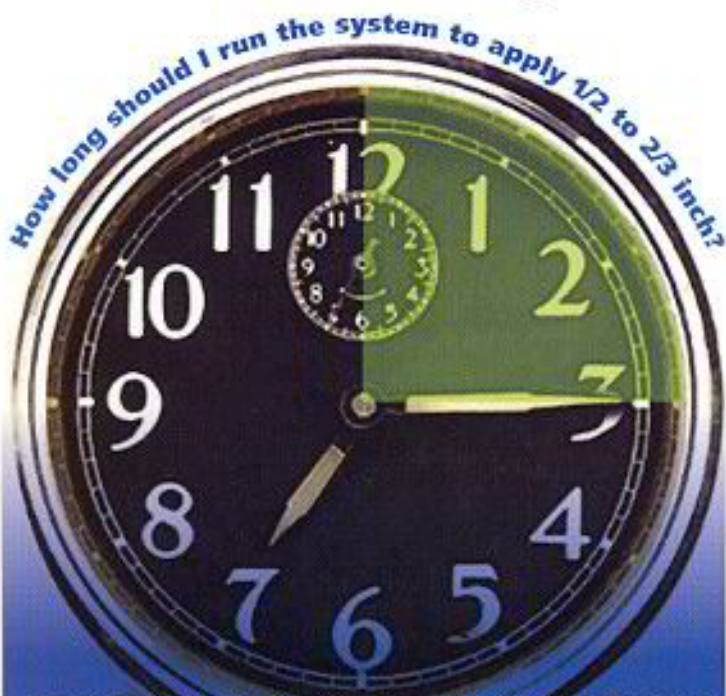
### How often is "infrequently"?

Volusia County's current 2-day a week watering restrictions fit well with University of Florida Extension recommendations. If watering is done to the correct depth, two days a week should be adequate except during the period of establishment when plants need more frequent water. In winter when plant growth slows or stops, watering every week or two weeks is enough.

### How deep is "deeply"?

Water enough to wet 18 inches of soil (the full root zone for turfgrass).

To wet 18 inches of soil, with the sandy soils of our area, apply 1/2 to 2/3 inch of water with each irrigation.



How long should I run the system to apply 1/2 to 2/3 inch?

To know how long to run your particular sprinkler system to apply that amount, calibrate your sprinkler system (by the tuna can calibration method on the reverse side).

