

All - Great News - I know you just heard from me this past week - but I thought this one was important enough to send it out as we are now approaching spring planting time. We've been adding drip systems to existing irrigation systems - and installing new ones for many clients for the past year or so - so this will really help a number of you.

Effective 3/3/09, by order of EPD Director Dr. Carol Couch, use of soaker hoses and drip irrigation WILL be allowed for three days per week, one hour per day on an odd/even schedule, between midnight and 10 a.m. This is in addition to the 25 minute per day hand-hose watering allowance. The press release with complete information is below.

For all new landscape installations, the allowances from 2008 continue. New landscape installations can be watered three days per week on an odd/even schedule between midnight and 10 a.m. with any type of irrigation (including installed irrigation systems) upon completion of the Outdoor Water Use Registration Program, hosted at www.urbanagcouncil.com. The Program must be completed for EACH 10 week installation during the year.

Excerpt from EPD Announcement

Drip Irrigation and Soaker Hoses

Under a March 3, 2009 order issued by the Director of the Environmental Protection Division (EPF), outdoor watering using drip irrigation and soaker hoses will be allowed in the 55 county area currently under drought response Level IV outdoor watering restrictions.

[Click here](#) for a copy of the map showing the Level IV area.

For a copy of the March 3 order and Press Release, [click here](#).

Drip irrigation is a highly efficient irrigation system that slowly waters the soil directly around the base of individual plants through small flexible pipes and emitters. This minimizes evaporative losses, pooling, runoff and wetting of plant foliage. Drip irrigation may be part of a larger automated irrigation system or may operate as a standalone system connected to a typical outdoor faucet.

According to the Alliance for Water Efficiency, drip irrigation is arguably the most efficient method of watering. While the efficiency of traditional sprayhead or sprinkler irrigation system is typically only about 50 percent and rarely exceeds 70 percent, the efficiency of a well-designed and operated drip irrigation system can reach nearly 100 percent!

Soaker hoses are a less expensive alternative to drip irrigation that are also much more efficient than traditional sprayhead or sprinkler irrigation systems. Soaker hoses are

connected to a typical outdoor faucet and also deliver water slowly and directly to the soil around the base of individual plants.

The Saving Water Partnership reports that, when used correctly, soaker hose can help maintain your landscape without wasting water. Remember these tips when considering where and when to use a soaker hose:

- ***Find the right site*** – soaker hoses are best in garden beds.
- ***Start at the faucet*** – always connect a backflow preventer and timer to the faucet.
- ***Too long is wrong*** – don't use more than 100 feet of soaker hose.
- ***Keep it level*** – for uniform water delivery, place soaker on level ground
- ***Use correct spacing*** – don't put lines too close together or too close to the base of the plant.
- ***Slow the flow*** – turn on faucet so hose seeps, but does not spray.