

Watering Your Colorado-Friendly Landscape

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Survival vs Appearance

- Homeowners want appearance AND water conservation
- Supplemental irrigation may be required for appearance

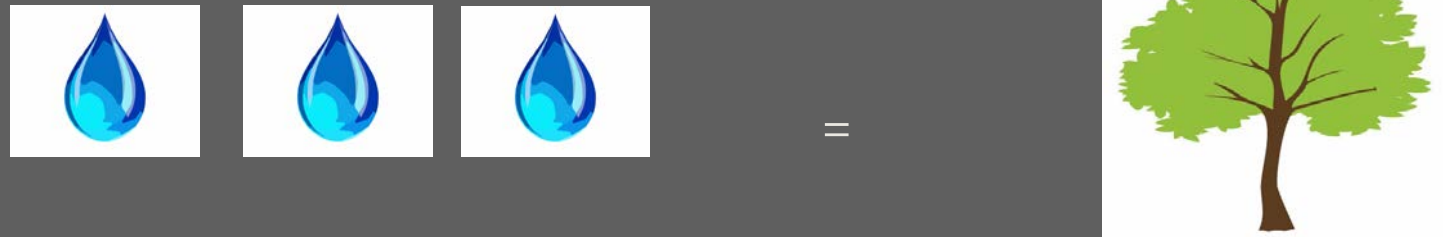
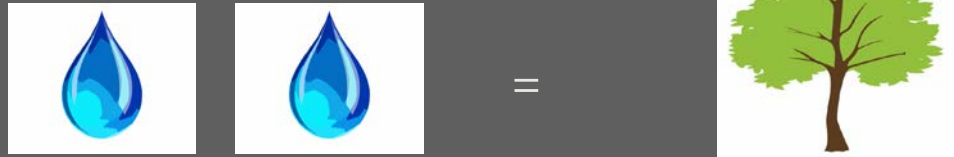


Water use or water requirement?

- For water-wise landscape purposes, **water requirement** is more meaningful.
- What is the **minimum** amount of water required to maintain appearance?
- **What is the maximum interval between irrigations?**
- Water-wise, Colorado friendly plants tend to use what you give them (results from Garden in a Box project)

How to Irrigate

- More water = more growth



How to Irrigate

- More water = more growth
- The way you manage water influences the plant growth in the garden
- **Deliberately minimize** the amount of water applied
- **Deliberately maximize the time between Irrigations**
- Easier to apply the same amount of water each time but at different time intervals depending on the weather and season
- Know how much time it takes to apply
1-1 ½ inches



How To Irrigate

- Water-Wise plants are highly drought tolerant
- Let them use this capability
- Letting the soil dry between irrigations is key
- None of the plant zones (Garden in a Box, Plaza plant zones, or around the weather station) have been irrigated yet this year

Water Conservation in Landscapes

- Is achieved because of the
 - Plant selections
 - Irrigation management
 - Planting density—more plants = more water need
 - All of the above



How to Irrigate

- Separate water-wise irrigation zones from turf zones
 - Use drip irrigation
- Manually turn irrigation on and off



How to Irrigate

- Use rainfall whenever possible
 - Irrigate infrequently
- Let the plants tell you when to water
 - Usually an indicator plant you can rely on
- Applying 1-1 ½" per irrigation will provide moisture throughout the root zone of an established garden
- Manually turn irrigation on and off



Morning Sunrise Garden

Indicator plant:
Rudbeckia



How to Irrigate

- Delay irrigation as long as possible early in the season
- Know your soil-use a screwdriver to check soil moisture (don't puncture any tubing)
- High spring rainfall can delay irrigation until early to mid-July
- Dry springs can mean earlier irrigation
 - But slower plant growth

Morning Sunrise Garden

Irrigate every 3-4 weeks
if no rainfall

Longer intervals between
Irrigation with rainfall



How to Irrigate

- Longer irrigation intervals early and late in the growing season
- Cooler, less water demand
- About 2 inches of combined precipitation and irrigation are sufficient to maintain water-wise landscapes in June, July, and August-possibly less
- A rain gauge is helpful



How to Irrigate

- Water deeply and infrequently—better plant health
- Better water conservation
- Better drought resilience
- Plants with drought tolerance allow much more flexibility with irrigation amount and timing.



Questions?