

K.S. Design Group, Inc. Landscape, Design/Build, Maintenance Contractor

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How to care for your new landscaping.....

To keep your plants seed, and sod looking their best please follow the recommendations below. **WATER:** Watering your newly planted and transplanted trees, shrubs, perennials and annuals is crucial to having beautiful and healthy plants. Until your plants are established (about 3 months), please follow the schedule below. Of course DON'T OVER WATER! If there is water standing around your new plants or the soil is moist when you stick your finger 3" down in the soil around your new perennials or groundcover, or if when you brush the mulch away from the top of the root ball and you can gently press your fingers in a ½" or so into the root ball on your trees and shrubs, do not water that day. Newly planted or transplanted trees, shrubs and perennials can go into shock which can result in wilted leaves, leaves turning brown or leaf droppage. Call us if you have any concerns about your new plant materials.

Watering schedule for newly planted or transplanted trees, shrubs, perennials and annuals, sod

Trees and shrubs

Northern Illinois trees require 1 inch of water per week when in leaf from either the rain or from you watering. Set your hose on slow trickle at the tree's dripline (the extent of the branch spread). Move the hose periodically to cover as much of the root zone as possible. You will have given your tree approximately 1 inch of water in 15-20 minutes. Care must be taken not to over water! We do have sources for irrigation aids to make sure your trees are getting the proper amount of water. To check if they are getting enough water, move the mulch back and press your fingers gently into the root ball, if it give ½" or so, watering is not needed today, if the root ball is hard, increase the length of time you are watering, not the frequency, you want deep watering to promote strong tap roots, light frequent watering does not do this. IF WE HAVE A HOT SPELL /DROUGHT PERIOD you may need to increase the frequency of your watering regimen.

Perennials, Annuals: Use the following as a guideline for watering your newly planted or transplanted materials.

Water every day for the first 2 weeks

Water every other day for the next 2 weeks (week 3 and 4)

Water twice a week for the rest of the summer

For your Roses – make sure when you water you water only at the base of the plant, do not splash on the leaves. This avoids getting black spot, powdery mildew etc. Use the same watering guideline as the rest of your perennials and annuals. If the soil is moist when you stick your finger in the soil at the base of your newly planted or transplanted plant, do not water that day. IF WE HAVE A HOT SPELL /DROUGHT PERIOD you may need to water every day, check the moisture content of the soil. Follow this to know if you need to water more often: If the soil is NOT moist when you stick your finger 3" down in the soil around your new plants, WATER. Remember, a wilted plant does not necessarily mean you need to water, check the soil first as you may be over watering or your plant could have a disease or bug.

Sod

- 1) Watering must be started immediately after the sod is installed. *Watering should begin as soon as an area large enough to put down a sprinkler is ready.* This way you can get started watering while the rest of the sod is being installed.
- 2) *It is essential that enough water is put down the first time to thoroughly soak the sod and the soil under the sod.* You can check the moisture content by lifting up a flap of the sod and sticking your finger into the soil. It should be moist several inches deep. By giving the sod a heavy first watering, you will rid the sodded area of air pockets, which dries out the sod.
- 3) After the first watering, water enough to keep the soil under the sod moist, not muddy. *In very hot weather, you may have to water 2 times daily. Do not allow the sod or soil underneath to dry out between waterings. Ideal watering periods are early mornings and/or early evening.*
- 4) *Pay special attention to the corners and edges of newly sodded areas, they tend to dry out sooner and they are hard to water properly.* You may have to hand water these areas.
- 5) If a newly sodded area accidentally does dry out, it will probably turn brown. *It is not dead, and will green up in about two weeks with PROPER water applications.*
- 6) In about two weeks, the sod should have begun to knit to the soil underneath and the watering can be lessened to once or twice per week depending on weather conditions. *Water anytime the sod has a dry pale blue gray color or if the grass does not spring back after walking on it.*
- 7) *No mower traffic until time for first mowing.* Turn off irrigation 2 days prior to first mowing. Test mow a small area to insure no movement of ground or sod.
- 8) There should be No foot traffic until after 2nd mowing or when grade beneath new sod is stable. *It is important to know that frequent shallow waterings are not good for your lawn.* They cause the root system to grow near the surface. You may water less often, but water deeply. Over time, the roots will follow the water down into the soil and you will have lush healthy turf.

Seed (Includes Slit seeding)

- 1) Insure no pre-emergent crabgrass control is used on newly seeded areas.
- 2) Seed must be kept moist to promote germination. After the first watering, water enough to keep the soil moist, not muddy. In very hot weather, you may have to water more than once a day. Do not allow the seed or soil underneath to dry out between waterings. Ideal watering periods are early mornings and/or early evening.
- 3) It is essential that enough water is put down the first time to thoroughly soak the seed and the soil under it. You can check the moisture content by sticking your finger into the soil. It should be moist several inches deep.
- 4) In about two weeks, the watering can be lessened to two or three times per week depending on the weather conditions.
- 5) Wait until after the second mowing at a minimum before applying any selective herbicides/fertilizers.

Mowing your new lawn

About two weeks after installation, your new lawn may need mowing. It is important to let your lawn dry out for a day or two so it firms up a bit before going over it with a heavy machine. Make sure that the mowing height is set at about 3". Letting your lawn grow a little longer is good for the grass because it encourages a strong root system. Never mow the sod/seed installed by KS Design shorter than 2" and never remove more than 1/3 of the grass leaf at any one mowing. Using a mulching mower is a great idea. It returns the clippings to the lawn so they can decompose and provide added nutrients.

If, after reviewing the annual maintenance information on your annuals and perennials or shrub maintenance you do not feel comfortable performing the suggested maintenance **KS Design Group, Inc.** will be happy to take care of this for you. Please call for complete information.