

**FACT SHEET**  
**Watering Grass Seed**

**Modified Phase I Water Restrictions**

***Are you establishing a new lawn, renovating a poor-performing lawn, or simply overseeding an existing lawn?*** The answer to this question determines whether extra watering is allowed.

**Seeding a New Lawn (Establishing a New Lawn)**

The entire area contains no plant material, and grass seed is being used to create a lawn.

- In this situation, the entire area qualifies for the District's "new plant establishment" exemption (please refer to the fact sheet devoted to this subject).

**Reseeding a Poor-Performing Lawn (Renovating a Poor-Performing Lawn)**

There are bare patches or visible thinning, but a lawn is already there, more or less. Perhaps there was damage to the grass due to a recent weed infestation, pest problem or lawn disease. Perhaps foot traffic or improper use of lawn chemicals caused injury to the roots or rhizomes as well as the grass blades. Perhaps too much water, too little water or a hard freeze has killed some of the grass.

- If at least 50% of a lawn area has been reduced to "bare dirt" and grass seed is being used to restore it, use of the irrigation zone associated with that area qualifies for the District's "new plant establishment" exemption (please refer to the fact sheet devoted to this subject).
- If less than 50% of an irrigation zone has been affected, only the seeded patches within that area qualify for the District's "new plant establishment" exemption. This means the patches must be watered by some targeted means, such as handwatering or a small hose-end sprinkler.

**Overseeding an Existing Lawn**

This is different than overseeding a golf course as part of a fall transition program (in such a program, a cool-weather grass is added to the warm-weather grass to protect it from foot traffic and cart damage when it goes semi-dormant in the winter). Overseeding an existing lawn is sometimes used to improve the appearance of the grass, but this **\*does not qualify\*** for the "new plant establishment" exemption.

- If an existing lawn is overseeded, it may only be watered according to the normal irrigation schedule. If the seed is gently worked into the lawn (so that existing grass provides some shade to the seed, helping to keep the soil moist while it germinates), normal irrigation may be enough.
- There are several low-water or no-water alternatives to overseeding, including: appropriate fertilization (test the soil, contacting the local UF-IFAS extension service for assistance), application of an iron compound (especially to improve winter color), mowing high (especially to reduce stress to the grass during hot or dry weather) and spray-on paint designed for use on grass.

If you have any questions about how these or other Modified Phase I Water Restrictions apply to your facility, please call 1-800-848-0499 during normal business hours or send an inquiry to [Water.Restrictions@WaterMatters.org](mailto:Water.Restrictions@WaterMatters.org).





## Water Management District

### FACT SHEET Modified Phase II (Severe Water Shortage) Restrictions including November 2009 changes to Chapter 40D-22, F.A.C.

#### New Plant Establishment

*New plant material, including grass (sod, seed, plugs, etc.), may initially need extra water applications to successfully establish. This "establishment period" need varies, depending on the type of plant material and the time of year involved.*

#### KEY FACTS:

- Unless your city or county has a similar or more stringent local standard, the allowable "new plant establishment period" for all plant material is 60 days total.
-  On days 1–30, beginning the day of installation, the new plant material may be watered on ANY day of the week.
-  On days 31–60, the new plant material may be watered approximately every other day. "Even" addresses may only water on Tuesday/Thursday/Sunday and "odd" addresses may only water on Monday/Wednesday/Saturday.
-  On the day the plant material is installed, this extra watering can occur only ONCE during otherwise restricted hours.
-  After the day of installation, this extra watering must be accomplished during allowable watering hours.
- There are additional limitations and exceptions for certain circumstances (see below).

#### LIMITATIONS AND EXCEPTIONS:

- The extra "establishment period" watering is limited to new plant material. An entire zone in an irrigation system, however, may be used if the area the zone covers contains at least 50% new plant material.
- Irrigation system zones containing less than 50% new plant material must be watered by some other means, such as handwatering or a soaker hose, so that only the new plant material is irrigated.
- Sprigs (a special form of grass propagation, typically used on athletic play surfaces, such as football fields) can be watered during otherwise restricted times throughout the establishment period, not just the day of installation.
- If you have any questions about how these restrictions apply to your circumstances, please call 1-800-848-0499 or 1-800-863-0797, ext. 2298.

#### EXTRA WATER CONSERVATION TIPS:

- Use hand watering or micro-irrigation technology to meet the needs of potted plants, flower beds, shrubs, or specimen trees if they will require more than once-per-week watering after the first 60 days.
- Under the Modified Phase II restrictions, hand watering and micro-irrigation may be used to water any non-turfgrass plant material on any day and at any time, if needed.

*This fact sheet is only a summary. Review Water Shortage Order SWF 07-02, as modified, as well as the District's Water Shortage Plan (Rule 40D-21) and Year-Round Water Conservation Measures (Rule 40D-22) for complete details; all of these items are available online (please visit [www.WaterMatters.org](http://www.WaterMatters.org)).*