

# Longhorn Services



In the last year, we have seen news articles discussing the increasing lack of water in areas across the country. Austin has its own extensive history of droughts and the City has decided to be proactive by introducing new water restrictions that will be in effect even when we are not in a drought stage.

Between May 1st and September 30th, all residents of Austin are required to water their lawns on specific days and during specific times. If you water your lawn or plants outside of the designated schedule, you can face some hefty fines.

If your home has an odd number address, you are allowed to water on Wednesday and Saturday. If you have an even numbered address, you are allowed to water your plants on Thursday and Sunday.

In addition to being required to water on specific days, all customers are required to irrigate either after 7pm or before 10am.

If you do not follow these new schedules, you will likely just initially receive a warning. The Water Conservation program first wants to educate people about the proper way to water their landscapes. However, violations are a class C misdemeanor and customers who refuse to comply can be cited.

You can face fines of \$200 for watering at the wrong time. Once we enter a stage one drought, you can get a fine of \$200 for watering on the wrong day and \$359 for watering at the wrong time. During a stage two drought, the fines jump up to \$559.

Stephen Petrik, president of Longhorn Services, says "we've had an influx of calls from customers all over Austin asking us to reprogram their controllers. Many people have never adjusted their sprinkler system timers before."

In addition to the new fines for violating watering schedules, the city has also decided to create fines meant to target people that don't maintain their irrigation systems.

Unfortunately, it's too common to see broken sprinkler heads gushing water, systems running in the rain or water spraying onto sidewalks and streets. Poor management of automatic systems can lead to a variety of landscape problems, including fungal disease, brown spots and other signs of plant stress.

"Many homeowners are under the mistaken impression that since their home has an irrigation system, they never need to concern themselves with its operation. They couldn't be more mistaken" says Mr. Petrik.

"Sprinkler heads break or get clogged all the time, and many times you're damaging your grass by watering certain areas too much or too little. Irrigation systems require some minimal maintenance – a lot like changing the oil and spark plugs in your car. With all the new regulations out, this is the perfect time to get for homeowner's to have their systems looked at, not only for minor problems but for compliance issues as well."

If you think your system might need to be checked out, contact an experienced licensed irrigator such as Longhorn Services at (512) 837-4800 or visit their website at <http://www.Longhorn-Services.com>