



# RICE'S CARE GUIDE

## WATERING INSTRUCTIONS

### TREES & SHRUBS

The roots of trees and shrubs must not dry out completely. This is especially the case during the first growing season since such stress may kill the plant.

The frequency and amount of water depends on the type of the soil and the amount of recent precipitation. Your plants are generally installed in a combination of on-site soil, topsoil, and planting mix. This is considered a light soil and, on average, should be watered as follows:\*

April 15 – May 15	1x/week
May 16 – September 15	2x/week**
September 16 – October 31	1x/week

Follow up with a thorough final watering in the middle of November. This will ensure the plant has adequate moisture to sustain itself through the winter months.

To properly water trees and shrubs, remove any nozzles and place the hose on the ground approximately 6 inches from the stem or trunk. Water flow should be a small stream about ¼ inch in diameter (it should take about 5 seconds to fill a coffee cup). Shift the hose around to ensure even watering. Duration depends on plant size. Approximate water times are:\*

Small to medium shrub	1-2 minutes
Large shrub	2-3 minutes
Evergreen & deciduous tree	20 minutes

*\*The suggested watering frequency and duration are all starting points. Frequency, duration, and process should all be adjusted depending on weather conditions.*

*\*\*During hot, dry summers (multiple days above 90 degrees), watering should be increased to 3 to 4 times a week.*

### PERENNIALS/GROUNDCOVER/ANNUALS

A light watering every other morning is recommended for these plant materials because most are shallow rooted. Use a nozzle or long-stemmed watering wand to gently yet thoroughly wet the perennial, groundcover, and/or annual plant bed almost to the point of run off. Typically 5 to 10 seconds per plant. You may need to return to each plant multiple times for adequate watering.

### NEW/REPAIRED LAWNS

**Seeded lawn:** A seeded lawn should be watered daily. A seeded lawn installed in the summer will require more frequent watering than one installed in the spring or fall. Once watering has started, it should not be interrupted until the lawn has been adequately established.

**Sodded lawn:** Immediately begin watering your sodded lawn. It is critical that watering be done at least twice per day until the roots have established. After approximately 2 to 3 weeks, a reduced watering schedule can be established.

During the first three-week establishment period, seeded and sodded lawns should be kept evenly moist but not muddy. Water seeded lawns for approximately 9 to 12 minutes 1 to 2 times every day for the first two weeks and 1 to 2 times every other day for the third week. Water long enough to allow a 1 to 2 inch moisture depth for seed germination. Water sodded lawns 2 times per day for the first 2 to 3 weeks, watering long enough for a 3 inch moisture depth. (See below on how to determine water depth). After the third week, water with less frequency while maintaining the same depth of watering.

Adjust your watering pattern if the ground appears to dry out, the grass starts to turn yellow or brown, and/or there is considerable rainfall.

Please note: Your lawn may show the above signs of stress from heat or malnutrition even months after establishment. Proper lawn care, especially fertilization and continual watering, is vital to maintaining a healthy lawn.

### DETERMINING WATERING DEPTH

Watering patterns should be adjusted based on the rainfall received throughout the growing season. Most plants require about an inch of rain fall per week during establishment. Keep in mind, the majority of heavy rain will run off and not be absorbed into the soil.

To determine if watering is required, check the soil near the base of the plant to a depth of 2 to 3 inches by taking your index finger or a piece of metal hanger wire and pressing it into the soil to this depth.

- The plant has been properly watered if the soil feels moist with a small amount clinging to your finger or the wire.
- If the soil is loose and muddy (about the consistency of pudding) the plant is getting too much water.
- If the soil feels dry and is difficult to penetrate, follow the recommend watering methods immediately.

### EXPERT TIPS

- Please note that plants can easily be overwatered, suffocating the roots and killing them.
- Soaker hoses are another watering option that run off your spigot(s). They should be installed in runs of less than 100 linear feet. If more is required, create multiple runs. On average, run soaker hoses for 30 to 90 minutes depending on the output of your soaker hose.
- Check the soil after the first few waterings to determine if the method or timing needs adjusted. It is important to routinely check if plant material needs more or less watering throughout the growing season.
- Avoid shooting jets of water directly at a plant. This can damage a plant, potentially causing it to defoliate. Water spots on foliage subject to direct sunlight may cause burn marks to the plant.
- **Please note: Your failure to adequately water any plant materials will void your warranty.**