



## **“From the Potting Shed”**

Riverview Garden Club  
Helpful Hints  
July – 2025

During times of high temperatures and periods of less rain, keeping flower beds, container plants and vegetable gardens well-watered can be a challenge. Here are some water-wise gardening tips to keep your plants thriving through the summer.

### **How and When to Water the Garden**

The general rule of thumb is about an inch or two of water each week with deep, less-frequent watering directed at the roots of the plants. Shallow, frequent watering is inefficient and not healthy for plants.

- amend the soil with compost to improve drainage and allow for some water retention
- apply mulch to help control weeds, conserve moisture, moderate soil temperatures and protect produce and flowers from mud and puddles that can lead to rot and disease
- best time for watering is morning which reduces evaporation
- late afternoon is okay if the foliage has a chance to dry out avoiding any fungal issues
- larger plants need more water as do newly planted ones
- vegetables, bedding plants, and many perennials have more shallow root systems and require more frequent watering, some daily -- especially in temps over 85 degrees F
- most container plants need watering on a daily basis in hot, dry conditions — sometimes twice a day
- deep watering encourages deeper and stronger root growth
- overhead sprinklers are less efficient for watering, with the exception for lawns, as these lose more water to evaporation not reaching the plants' roots
- soaker hoses or drip irrigation are always better, going straight to the roots while keeping foliage dry

- in the vegetable garden, leafy greens, tomatoes, cucumbers, squash, watermelons, and beans need to be kept evenly moist
- flower beds with perennials that are established will produce beautifully with the 1 inch per week
- keep trees and shrubs moist and never allow the soil to dry out completely
- early morning is the best time to water the lawn with 1 to 2 inches per week in the absence of rainfall
- AVOID watering plants when the sun is at its highest when temperatures are hottest in the afternoon

## **How to Keep Plants Growing Strong While You're on Vacation**

### For Houseplants, Container Plants and Hanging Baskets

- move plants to a shady area to avoid heat stress and reduce evaporation
- water thoroughly before leaving
- cover the soil with mulch to retain moisture
- place containers in basins, plastic tubs or a kiddie pool filled with a few inches of water
- invest in self-watering containers

### For Raised Beds, Inground Plants and Vegetable Gardens

- water plants deeply before leaving
- remove weeds that compete for moisture
- set a timer to soaker hoses or sprinkler
- add a one-inch layer of compost, shredded leaves or wood chips to retain moisture and prevent weeds from competing with plants for water
- harvest all ripe fruits and vegetables before you leave and share them with family and friends

Source:

Gardening Know How, “*When is the Best Time to Water Plants? Expert Guide to Keep Plants Healthy Even in the Heat*”, Bonnie L. Grant, June 2025.

***Happy Gardening!***