Irrigation may occur before 10 a.m. or after 4 p.m., as follows:
ODD addresses on Wed. & Sat. / EVEN addresses on Thurs. & Sun.

However, this time of year often marks the beginning of Florida's rainy season. So, we suggest the following for **May & June watering**:
One scheduled irrigation of 1/2" to 3/4" per week. Then, use the second allowed day of irrigation if grass shows signs of need, like blades folded in half lengthwise or footprints lingering in the lawn.

- 1/2 to 3/4" is about 10-15 minutes per spray head zone
- 1/2 to 3/4" is about 30-45 minutes per rotor head zone

Do you need help deciding which type of spray heads you have? Call for FREE training or to report new plantings that require additional irrigation, (352) 527-7669.
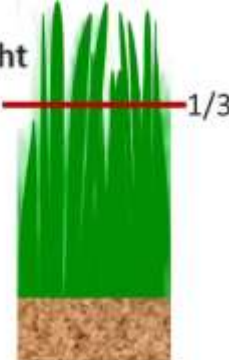
Mowing Practices Affect Lawn Health
Two of the most important practices that can improve grass health are proper mowing height and frequency. Maintaining the correct height can increase turf density, support a deeper root system, and increase pest resistance. Increasing turf density is a great way to discourage weed establishment. The result is fewer headaches and a lower dependence on chemical herbicides. A deeper root system provides several benefits, including greater resistance to drought, lower water bills and less wasted water. In addition, turf's overall health increase helps it to better respond to environmental and pest problems.

Mowing Height
Most homes grow either a St. Augustine or Bahia lawn. These coarse-leaved grasses are best mowed between 3 and 4" high (a few dwarfs are shorter – see table below). In general, the shorter grass is mown, the shorter the corresponding underground root system. Shallow roots limit turf's ability to tolerate temperature stress, poor soil conditions, drought, even wear and tear from foot or wheel traffic. Set your mower deck at the optimum height for your turf type.

Grass/Turf Type	Optimal Mowing Height
Bahia	3.5 – 4.0"
St. Augustine *	3.0 – 4.0"
Zoysia	2.0 – 2.5"
Centipede	1.5 – 2.0"
Bermuda	1.5"

*A few cultivars are dwarf & should be mowed at 2.5"

1/3

Mowing Frequency

The goal is to remove no more than 1/3 of the grass blade at a time. Cutting off more leaf blade can cause turf stress, making it more susceptible to insect, disease, and even sunburn/sunscald. A winter mowing schedule may be once every 2-3 weeks. During the growing season, mowing may need to happen at minimum once weekly to maintain the correct length.

Planting a **beautiful yard** this spring?

Spruce up your sprinkler before you ramp up your water use.

A broken or missing sprinkler head could waste 25,000 gallons of water and $280 over a six-month irrigation season. Before you ramp up your watering this spring, spruce up your irrigation system by remembering four simple steps—inspect, connect, direct, and select:

Inspect. Check your system for clogged, broken, or missing sprinkler heads. Need assistance? Citrus County Utilities offers a free one-on-one irrigation system check up. Call (352) 527-7669 to schedule.

Connect. Examine points where the sprinkler heads connect to pipes/hoses. If water pools in your landscape or you have large wet areas, you could have a leak in your system.

Direct. Are you watering the driveway, house, or sidewalk instead of your yard? Redirect sprinklers to apply water only to the landscape.

Select. Update your watering schedule with the seasons or select a WaterSense labeled controller to take the guesswork out of scheduling. Citrus County offers a $150 account credit for new Water Sense labeled controllers.

For more tips, visit www.epa.gov/watersense/outdoors.

Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ PROGRAM

FREE Classes

On the following Tuesdays, 2 to 4 PM:

May 7 — Optimizing irrigation systems

May 21 — Managing pests wisely

Jun. 11 — 9 Florida-Friendly principles

Jun. 25 — Soils - the garden foundation

On the following Wednesdays, 6 to 8 PM:

May 15 — Basics of managing Florida turfgrass

These FREE workshops are held at the Citrus County Extension Services office.

For details and to register, go to: **ccuFFLprogram.eventbrite.com**.