



On Tuesday December 4, 2007 the Fort Worth City Council amended the Water Conservation Ordinance by prohibiting lawn watering between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. year round.

The approved ordinance amendments also allow locking out in-ground irrigation systems as an enforcement option. The lock out would occur either at the backflow device required on all irrigation systems or at a separate irrigation meter, if it exists.

Most commercial accounts have separate meters for irrigation systems but few residential accounts have a separate meter.

There is an administrative fee associated with removal of the device. The fee would be \$25 for the first offense, \$50 for the second offense and \$75 for the third offense. Multiple violations could result in lock out as well as a citation. The fee would be added to the customer's water bill. There is also a process for appealing the administrative fee.

Locations with alternative water sources for irrigation, such as wells or Trinity River water, would be exempt from the time of day requirements but must [register](#) these sources with the city.

In addition, the ordinance amendments establish some affirmative defenses to prosecution should a citation be issued. This means the court could dismiss the ticket if the customer could prove they were establishing hydromulch, grass sod, grass seed (30-day period); conducting dust control for sport fields; or conducting maintenance, repair, or testing of an irrigation system.

View complete [Water Conservation Ordinance](#) online.

Lawn and Landscape Irrigation Restrictions

- * No landscape watering between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m., with the exception of watering by hand or with soaker hoses. This time of day restriction is in effect year round.
- * A person commits an offense if he knowingly or recklessly irrigates, waters, causes or permits irrigation of a lawn or landscape located on premises owned, leased or managed to cause:
 - * A substantial amount of water to fall on impervious areas (i.e. sidewalk or street) instead of a lawn or landscape, such that a constant stream overflows to the street or other drainage area; or
 - * An irrigation system or other lawn or landscape watering device to operate during any form of precipitation.
- * A person commits an offense if the system or device on premises they own, lease or manage has:
 - * Any broken or missing sprinkler heads; or
 - * Has not been properly maintained in a manner that prevents the waste of water.
- * An affirmative defense to prosecution of an offense of irrigating during restrictive hours is if the activity was for the purpose of no more than a period of 30 consecutive days:
 - * establishing hydromulch, grass sod or grass seed;
 - * dust control of a sports field; or
 - * maintenance, repair or testing of an irrigation system.
- * An exception to prosecution of an offense in this section is if an alternative water source such as a well, reclaimed or reused water or water from the Trinity River is used and the person

has:

- * Registered such alternative water source with the City;
- * Provided sufficient proof to the director that the alternative water source is from a well, reclaimed or reused water or water from the Trinity River and has allowed inspection by the director if deemed necessary; and
- * Complied with the City's Backflow and Cross-Connection Control Program and City Code Sections 12.5-525 through 12.5-599.

Rain and Freeze Sensors

New irrigation system installations, or retrofits of systems to add these sensors, require a city permit that is obtained by a [licensed irrigator or Master Plumber](#). The work can be performed by the [licensed irrigator or Master Plumber](#) or by someone working under their direct supervision.

Residential Systems: Rain and freeze sensors are required on all irrigation systems installed on or after June 1, 2007.

Commercial Systems

Rain and freeze sensors are required on all irrigation systems installed on or after June 1, 2006.

Commercial or industrial customer irrigation systems must be retrofitted with properly working rain and freeze sensors to operate after June 1, 2007.

An annual inspection of rain and freeze sensors is required. This inspection can be done in conjunction with current annual backflow assembly inspections.

Enforcement

It is unlawful for any person to knowingly or recklessly install, operate, cause or permit the installation or operation of an irrigation system in violation of these requirements on premises they own, lease or manage.

Any person, firm or corporation that violates, disobeys, omits, neglects or refuses to comply with this ordinance shall be fined up to \$2,000 for each offense. Each day a violation is permitted to exist will constitute a separate offense.

Wise water use is everyone's responsibility, please do your share to ensure sufficient water supply for the future.