

Important Things to Know About Drip Watering

Bundaberg Regional Council
PO Box 3130
BUNDABERG QLD 4670
1300 883 699
www.bundabergrc.qld.gov.au

Council hours
8.15am to 4.45pm
Monday to Friday

Fact Sheets available:

1. Water Cycle
2. Water Treatment
3. What I need to know about Wastewater
4. Wastewater Treatment
5. Water Pollution
6. Water Recycling
7. Water Efficiency
8. How to read your Water Meter
9. Water Meter Home Accuracy Check
10. Drip Water your Garden and save
11. Important things to know about drip watering
12. Water Audit for the Household
13. Rainwater Tanks
14. Pool Maintenance

Booklets available:

1. You Can Take Control
2. Create Your Own Water Wise Garden

Additional fact sheets from WaterWise Queensland can also be obtained through you Local Council.

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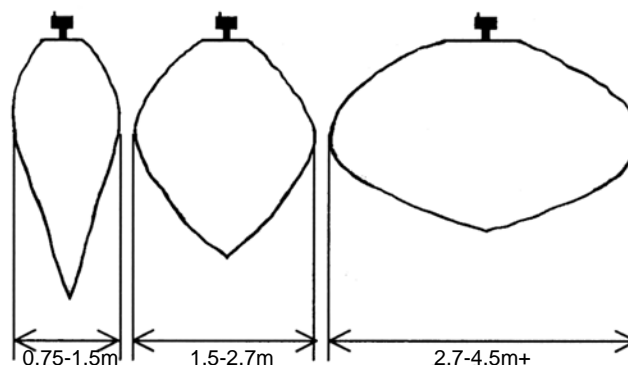
PLANTS

- Grow to their maximum ability when they receive a regular and consistent amount of water;
- Get the best use of water from that which reaches their feeder roots;
- Drip watering delivers the correct quantity of water to plant roots through the process of osmosis.

DRIP WATER SYSTEM

- Low density polythene pipe, 12mm or 19mm diameter, it is cheap, readily available and easy to work with;
- Fixed rate drip emitters, 2-4-6-8 litres per hour each, to provide a known quantity of water over a given time;
- A timer, 2 or 6 hour, cheap and readily available. More expensive timers are available however the best type is one that requires to be turned on manually and turns off automatically thus not likely to be used when it is raining or shortly after rain has fallen;
- Pressure Regulator, all drip irrigation equipment, low density pipe, emitters etc, are rated at 100 kPa (15 psi);
- The low pressure preserves the life of components through less stress, and provides a correctly designed constant pressure system that will have little effect on the normal operation of the house-work water usage;
- It is important to realise that Pressure Reducers are NOT to be used as they are not regulators and reduce pressure by a percentage of the original;
- Low pressure results in less likelihood of components blowing out and in the event of a blowout, water loss will be minimal due to the combination of low pressure and the timer.

Soil Wetting Patterns



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- System components, (regulators etc.) are rated at a given maximum flow rate, generally 250 litres per second. As an example this would allow for 125 x 2 litres/hour drippers in use at the one time. Where more watering was required, the system would be divided into branches each controlled by a plastic in-line tap and each having 250 litres/hour flow or less;
- Regular removal of end caps and flushing ensures a trouble free watering system;
- All systems require a form of backflow prevention to protect the normal water supply from possible contamination. A hose connected vacuum breaker is sufficient in a normal house situation however the law demands a testable medium hazard device, usually a double check valve (DCV) for greater protection in all properties other than houses.

RULE OF THUMB

- Many formulae exist that will work out the water requirements for individual plants however for a simple rule of thumb use the table provided (based on one 2 litre/hour dripper for a 1 meter diameter Australian native);

Soil	Time on	Period between watering	Season
Sandy	2 hours	1 to 2 days	Summer
		3 to 4 days	Autumn/Spring
		Once/week	Winter
Loam (Normal)	4 hours	3 to 4 days	Summer
		Once/week	Autumn/Spring
		Once/ 2 weeks	Winter
Clay	6 hours	Once/week	Summer
		Once/ 2 weeks	Autumn/Spring
		Once/month	Winter

- Water in sandy soils penetrates quickly and deeply (like a carrot) but also dissipates quickly, therefore water for short periods of time but frequently;
- Water in loamy soils penetrates and dissipates over a longer period of time and a cross section would look like a an onion;
- Water in clay soils takes a very long time to get down to the root zone and a long time to leave the root zone hence water for long periods but infrequently. The cross section would look like a pancake. Apply water at a slow application rate to prevent ponding and run-off;
- Fully grown tress do not need watering at all, their roots usually gather enough moisture from the soil without assistance; and

- More plants die by being over-watered than do by being under-watered.

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If you have any queries about any of the information presented in this fact sheet, please telephone Bundaberg Regional Council Water & Wastewater Infrastructure Planning Technical Support on 1300 883 699