



Garden Notes

GN 138

SPRINKLER TIMES

LEARN THE CONTROLLER

For many of us, the most puzzling piece of technology in our homes is our sprinkler controller. It doesn't have to be this way. By taking a few simple steps, you can master your sprinkler controller and begin to water efficiently.

- Read the manual first. If you don't have one, check online. Most manuals are available on the manufacturer's website.
- Follow the programming instructions step-by-step and in order. Skipping steps and working out of order is a common cause of mistakes.
- Get to know your controller. What functions does it have? A controller should have at least two independent programs with three start times per program. More is better. More start times and more programs result in better control, allowing you to water more efficiently with less waste.

USING A SCHEDULING WORKSHEET

Now that you are familiar with your controller and its capabilities, it is time to make it work for you. The best way to do this is to use a scheduling worksheet.

- By using the manual start or run function of your controller, identify which station controls which area(s) or zone(s) of your landscape. Turn on each station, one at a time, and note on the worksheet what zone is being watered. For example, station #1 is the front lawn, station #2 is the shrub bed beside the garage, etc.

Important Note: Don't try to program the controller and fill out the worksheet at the same time. Complete the worksheet before returning to the controller. The worksheet is your scheduling plan. The controller is the tool you will use to accomplish the plan.

- When you have determined which stations control which zones, you can determine how you want to water each zone. Different types of plants have different water requirements. Group zones with similar water needs on the same program. For example, put all turf zones on program A, all shrub zones on program B, and all vegetable gardens on program C.

Note: How well you can divide your system will be dependent on how many programs your controller has.

- Determine the run time for each station and record it on the worksheet.
- Determine the start times and days to water for each program and record them on the worksheet.
- Now you can program the controller.

Each controller will differ slightly in how you enter your schedule. Reading the manual, becoming familiar with your controller, and using the scheduling worksheet will enable you to use your controller to its full potential.

September 2010. Written by Don Smith, Water Management Coordinator, City of Folsom.

SPRINKLER SCHEDULING WORKSHEET

STATION RUN TIMES

Station No.	Location	Station Run Time			
		Program A	Program B	Program C	Program D
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					

START TIMES

	Start Time 1	Start Time 2	Start Time 3	Start Time 4	Start Time 5	Start Time 6	Start Time 7	Start Time 8
Program A								
Program B								
Program C								
Program D								

WATERING DAYS

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Program A								
Program B								
Program C								
Program D								