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# “THE PUDDLE”

## THE NORTH KINGSTOWN DEPARTMENT OF WATER SUPPLY NEWSLETTER

June 2023

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**Remember!** The new sprinkler ordinance is in effect through the months of July and August only, and requires that lawn watering, whether it be done with an in-ground system or a moveable sprinkler, be done only twice a week. If your house or business is on the east side (Narragansett Bay side) of Route 1 then you may water on Mondays & Thursdays only, if you are located on the west side (Exeter side) of Route 1 then you may water on Tuesdays and Fridays. No watering is permitted during the hottest part of the day from 10AM to 2PM on any day.

### When and how should you water lawn?

Generally, your lawn needs about **one inch of water per week**.

**Step 1:** Install a rain gauge and check it once each day.

**Step 2:** Once per week, apply only the amount of water needed to make up the one-inch difference not supplied by natural rainfall. For example, if rainfall produced one half inch of water during the week, then only one half inch of irrigation is needed to make up the difference. One long, slow watering each week is best.

**Step 3:** Water during the early morning hours to reduce evaporation and risk of plant disease.

With automatic, in-ground sprinkler systems, be sure you know how to turn the system off when it is raining or at other times when watering is not needed. Contact your irrigation professional for assistance.

### Watch the lawn for early signs of drought stress, which include:

- Development of a bluish-green coloration
- Rolling or folding of leaf blades
- Footprints remain visible on the lawn for several minutes after walking on it

At this time, you should apply one inch of water to the lawn. Continue to monitor rainfall with your rain gauge and look for recurring signs of drought stress.

### Additional water conservation tips

- Measure sprinkler output, at least once each season, with a shallow can or rain gauge to verify the amount of water actually being applied. Adjust the flow rate or running time until you get it right.
- Avoid watering driveways and streets. Contact your irrigation professional, if necessary, for help with re-positioning sprinkler heads.
- Leave the lawn clippings on the lawn. This builds organic matter content, which holds more water.
- Address soil compaction problems. Restricted root zones are more prone to drought stress and soil runoff is increased, wasting water.
- Reduce lawn area—especially those trouble spots. Options include mulched beds of drought-tolerant trees, shrubs, groundcovers; rock gardens, and use of crushed stone or other permeable paving options.

**Consider this:** one inch of water over a 1,000 sq. ft. area (10 ft. by 100ft.) is about 625 gallons. For this same amount of water, you could:

- Do 12 loads of laundry
- Take 25 showers
- Provide 10,000 glasses of water

**For more information visit our Healthy Landscapes website [www.healthylandscapes.org](http://www.healthylandscapes.org) or call 874-5398.**

- View our demonstration sites for landscaping ideas
- View our events page for upcoming workshops and events!
- Take our online survey

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## Eat Your Lawn...Save Water!

Most of us have heard of Euell Gibbons, the author of “Stalking The Wild Asparagus” fame. He introduced America to plants humans have been using since the dawn of our time here on this planet. But we don’t have to be die-hard foragers to get the benefit of incredibly packed nutrients. You can see some of the best plants right out your window: on your natural lawn!\* It’s better than spending time and money getting rid of these “weeds” to just enjoy them as a source of vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. When you think of the benefits - less lawn watering, smaller bills, no toxic chemicals in our water supply, less stress to our water infrastructure from hundreds of sprinklers going at full tilt all over town. Add to this, keeping our lawns green with mixed grass and clovers and these fine resident plants that await your salad bowl is a win for our aquifer AND our health.

Here’s the short list of some low growing greens that will provide you, pollinators, and our water a healthy boost this summer:

**Dandelion**- eat young leaves, cooked or raw, the flowers boiled and served with butter, as a garnish, or a lovely wine for the winter.

**Violets**- the flowers make a nice candy, or make a colorful salad The leaves are tiny and mild.

**Plantain**- not the banana kind, but broad tough leaves, so chop fine and add sparingly in a salad. It’s packed with nutrients!

**Purslane**- who knew this was a Superfood! Sour and salty, use the young leaves and stems for a crunch in salads.

Try adding these all to your store-bought lettuces - and enjoy!

Useful sites for further reading:

[https://www.feasting at home.com/violette-syrup/](https://www.feastingathome.com/violette-syrup/)

<https://www.growforagecookferment.com/plantain-natures-band-aid/>

<https://insanelygoodrecipes.com/purslane-recipes/>

<https://www.thekitchn.com/10-ways-to-use-those-dandelions-recipes-from-the-kitchn-188774>

<https://modernfarmer.com/2018/07/10-edible-weeds-likely-growing-in-your-yard/>

\* Always use plants from lawns free of pesticides, chemical fertilizers, and pet waste.

