



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WEEKLY WATERING SCHEDULE

How do I use the Weekly Watering Schedule?

Marin is split into three zones: the northern zone, the central zone, and the southern zone. To find out which one you are in, please review the [Marin Zoning Map](#). In the Weekly Watering Schedule table, find the appropriate run times based on your climate zone, irrigation system—spray or drip—and plant types. The run times are for a full seven day period, so remember to divide the number of minutes by the number of days that you irrigate per week to get the watering minutes for each of your irrigation days.

Note: The run times provided are based on a two-inch-per-hour precipitation rate for spray irrigation systems, and two-gallons-per-hour per plant application rate for drip irrigation systems. Your actual precipitation or application rates may vary. Please review the [Determining the Precipitation Rate](#) document for more information.

What is the “Watering Index”?

The Watering Index is a guide for people whose irrigation controllers include a water budget adjustment feature. This feature, either a button or a dial, eliminates the need to change the watering times one by one for each irrigation valve, and permits the watering run times for all valves to be increased or decreased with just one adjustment. Learn more about the [Watering Index](#).

What is ETo?

ETo, or reference evapotranspiration, is the amount of water lost into the air through evaporation from soil and transpiration from plants. The watering schedules for any given week are calculated to replenish the soil moisture lost the previous week. Learn more about [evapotranspiration](#).

How does Marin Water determine the ETo?

Marin Water employs a high tech weather station (located in the Pt San Pedro area of San Rafael) to continuously monitor air temperature, humidity, rainfall, wind speed and solar radiation. This information is modified to reflect prevailing conditions in Marin’s three climate zones and is used to determine the rate of evapotranspiration.

What else can I do to improve my irrigation efficiency?

- Water in the early morning when it’s cool and the wind is calm to reduce evaporation.
- Group plants with similar water needs together.
- Apply mulch to garden beds to slow evaporation of moisture from the soil.
- Fix irrigation leaks and adjust sprinkler heads so that they water plants, not pavement.
- Install a rain shutoff device if you don’t have one. Install a pressure reducer if you notice misting.
- Consider investing in a smart irrigation controller, which adjusts automatically to give your plants just the right amount of water.