

IRRIGATION SYSTEM CHECKLIST

Irrigation systems are generally “automatic”, meaning that they are operated by a controller or timer. However, they still require a periodic tune-up to be sure that all the parts are functioning properly. This is particularly true after winter, when the system is usually shut down. Many things can happen to that system during those long winter months, including freeze damage which cracks pipes or valves, insects crawling into very small openings and blocking spray heads, etc. Before the system is turned on for the season, turn each valve on and inspect all the working parts to be sure nothing is broken, leaking, or plugged. Here are some things to look for:

- Leaking valve
- Sprinkler head at the lowest point is leaking (replace valve – it is not shutting down completely)
- Wet, swampy areas (indicates leaking or broken pipe)
- Sprinkler head clogged or not spraying evenly (for plastic nozzles, remove and clean it out)
- Water shooting up into the air from a sprinkler nozzle (nozzle broken; replace nozzle)
- Sprinkler head leaking or broken
- Sprinkler leaning (sprinklers should be perpendicular to the ground)
- Rotors or impact sprinklers not oscillating
- Plants blocking the spray head (shrubs or grass)
- Sprinklers at an angle, shooting water up into the air
- Sprinklers turned in the wrong direction, watering the street or the neighbor's property
- The sprinkler's pop-up stem is not fully extending (low pressure)
- The sprinkler's spray is not reaching the proper area (low pressure)
- The pipes break (high pressure, faulty material)*
- The sprinkler nozzles or drip emitters blow off (high pressure)*
- Spray from the sprinkler is misting or fogging (high pressure)*
- Spray is overshooting desired areas (high pressure-turn the screw at the top of the nozzle counterclockwise to reduce pressure)*
- Sprinklers spraying paved areas (sprinkler spray needs reduced by turning the screw on the top clockwise or purchasing a nozzle that does not spray as far for example if you have a 12' spray replace it with a 8')
- Standing water in the gutter or on the property (valve running for too long a time – reduce run time)
- Water running down the driveway and into the gutter (misdirected or broken sprinkler)
- Sprinklers are coming on every day for 10 minutes (battery failure during a power outage. Replace battery)

*High pressure can be adjusted by reducing the flow-control knob on the valve.