

Summer Heat

By: Melinda Sperl

If you have brown spots in your yard in this heat you need to have your irrigation system checked out. It may be that the mowers have hit an irrigation head and broken one off, or the grass is holding them down. Over time the heads wear out and need to be replaced. Also with our hard water systems, we get granules that build up in the irrigation system that will cause the system to fail. It is worth taking a minute to check out your system to make sure everything is running properly. If needed, call a professional like us to make those repairs.

One thing I notice often is risers in flowerbeds. That is the old school system of watering plants. The object of watering plants is to water the soil not over the plants. Does it make sense that as the plants grow to keep putting higher and higher risers on the spray heads in the flowerbeds to spray over the plants? This is a very inefficient system of watering and often leaves the plants directly in front of this riser without water. To correct this, we put a pop-up on this spray head and then look to the areas that are not being watered in the front of the flowerbed and add spray heads. In other words, instead of expecting one irrigation head to water the entire flowerbed, add several that will cover the entire bed effectively without wasting precious water.

If all these solutions have been tried and you still have brown spots or dying plants, then we look at pest infestations. Because we had so much rain these last couple of months, we really have not had an insect problem. Now the soil is dry and the insects are taking hold. Look for spider webs on shrubs and chinch bugs on lawns. If you stay on top of this, you can stop them before you lose your lawn or plants.

Effective watering is your best friend in every situation. A good water or moisture meter is really the best solution and they can be purchased from the box stores online relatively cheaply. Many times, we find that our customers think their lawns are dry when in fact they are overwatering this time of year. Just because your mulch looks dry does not mean the root level of the plant is dry. Using a moisture meter will give you the real story of what is happening one foot below the soil.

Remember, you should never water your lawn daily! This only creates shallow rooted trees and grass subject to disease and insects.

Happy Gardening!

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