

TURF AND LANDSCAPE IRRIGATION BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICE

A *Best Management Practice* (BMP) is a **recommended** practice. For the irrigation industry, the practices are defined below as a guide to reduce water usage and protect water quality. BMPs for irrigation systems are economical, practical and sustainable approaches to maintain healthy and functional landscapes without exceeding the water requirements of the landscape.

BMP 1 - Assure Overall Quality of the Irrigation System

The purpose of an irrigation system is to provide supplemental water when rainfall is not sufficient to maintain the turf and landscape for its intended purpose. A quality irrigation system and its proper management are required to distribute supplemental water in a way that adequately maintain plant health while conserving and protecting water resources and the environment. Assuring the overall quality of the system requires attention to system design, installation, maintenance and management, in particular:

- The irrigation system shall be designed to be efficient and to uniformly distribute the water.
- The irrigation system shall be installed according to the industry design specifications.
- The irrigation system shall be regularly maintained to preserve the integrity of the design and to sustain efficient operation.
- The irrigation schedule shall be managed to maintain a healthy and functional landscape with the minimum required amount of water.

BMP 2 - Design the Irrigation System for the Efficient and Uniform Distribution of Water

The irrigation system shall be designed to be efficient and to uniformly distribute the water. Specific criteria that shall be considered in the design include soil type, slope, root depth, plant materials, microclimates, weather conditions and water source (e.g., quantity, quality and pressure). To conserve and protect water resources, the design shall incorporate the appropriate equipment components that meet state and local codes and site requirements.

BMP 3 - Install the Irrigation System to Meet the Design Criteria

The irrigation system shall be installed according to the design specifications. To conserve and protect water resources, the installed components shall meet the design specifications, manufacturer's specifications, and state and local code requirements. The installation shall result in an efficient and uniform distribution of the water. The irrigation contractor or installer shall be licensed (and certified where applicable) and insured.

BMP 4 - Maintain the Irrigation System for Optimum Performance

The irrigation system shall be regularly serviced to maintain the performance of the system as designed. To conserve and protect water resources and the environment, the serviced components shall meet the design specifications, manufacturer's specifications, and state and local code requirements. The maintenance shall result in sustaining an efficient and uniform distribution of the water. The maintenance contractor, owner, manager, or irrigation contractor shall be licensed and/or certified (where applicable) and insured.

BMP 5 - Manage the Irrigation System to Respond to the Changing Requirement for Water in the Landscape

To conserve and protect water resources and the environment, the irrigation schedule shall be changed as required to provide supplemental water to maintain a functional and healthy turf and landscape with the minimum required amount of water.

The BMPs defined above are based on the Irrigation Association's Turf and Landscape Irrigation Best Management Practices of December 2010 http://www.irrigation.org/uploadedFiles/Resources/BMP_Revised_12-2010.pdf

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