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Save Water with a Simple Drip System

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We all strive to cultivate a beautiful lawn and garden. Yet growing eco awareness has many feeling guilty about the amount of water they use to keep their grass, vegetable garden, and flowers lush and healthy. If your love of landscaping and gardening seems to be at odds with your eco-friendly principles, take heart that there are a range of home irrigation techniques and lawn irrigation systems that will allow you to **conserve plenty of water**, while still taking good care of your lawn and garden.

Drip irrigation (sometimes called microirrigation) is one of the most water-efficient systems around for outdoor landscape watering. Anything that saves water gets us excited at Hearts. Not only do we support **Generosity Water** through our iHeart Change campaign as one way to foster greater quality of life in some of the poorest communities in the world, we also utilize low-impact techniques in an effort to cut our eco fashion water consumption. Our goal is to create a movement of consumers who live more consciously, and this guide to simple drip irrigation systems is part of that effort. After all, water is the foundation for all life – let's preserve it!

Quick Guide: American Landscape Water Consumption and Waste

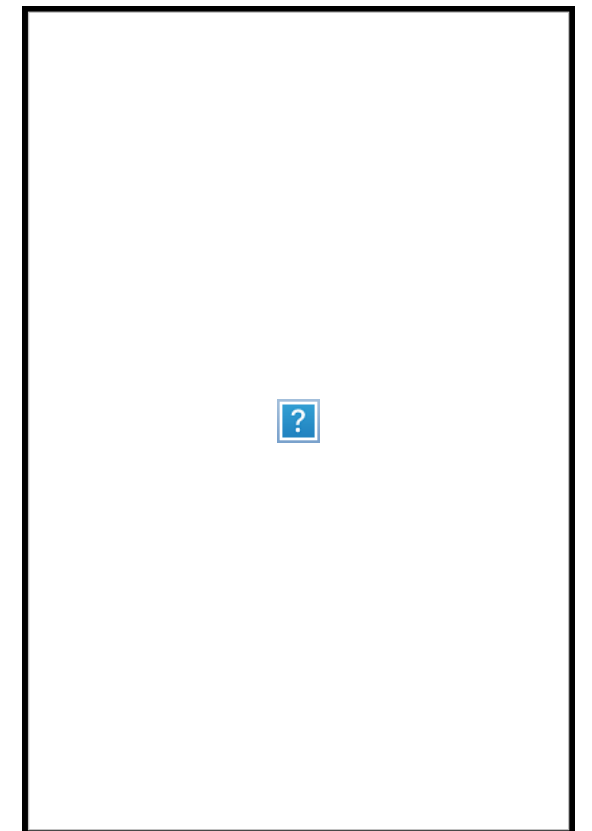
- **We use a lot of water on our landscapes:** Each day, the average American uses 400 gallons of water for domestic purposes, 30% (or 120 gallons) of which is used for outdoor lawn and garden care.^[i]

- **We use more water for landscapes than Africans do in their homes:** A typical African family will use only five gallons of water per day.^[ii] Compared to our 120 gallons used for lawn and garden, that's a big difference!

- **Our irrigation techniques lose water to evaporation:** 50% of all water used for lawn and garden irrigation is lost to evaporation because of inefficient irrigation techniques such as sprinklers and hoses.^{[iii] [iv]}

- **What is drip irrigation?** Typically, drip irrigation systems are designed with rubber tubes fitted with small holes. The hoses are placed at ground level, alongside plants, where drips of water irrigate plants at the root level, boosting the moisture of soil and keeping plants at optimum health.^v Since water is not aerated, there is less evaporation.

- **Drip irrigation cuts water use:** This technique can reduce irrigation water consumption by up to 50%.^[vi]



Take Action! Employ Drip Irrigation Principles at Home

1. **Where to use drip irrigation:** Drip irrigation isn't just for flower beds and veggie gardens – it's also useful for lawns (the biggest outdoor water waster you likely have on your property). Start with your lawn and then move to other parts of your landscape.
2. **Easy steps to create a DIY drip irrigation system at home:** Drip irrigation doesn't have to cost a fortune. To familiarize yourself with drip irrigation techniques on a small scale, read this [drip irrigation primer](#) to create effective, water-conserving drip irrigation systems. Or check out these SavingWater.org [tips on installing a drip irrigation system](#), as well as Lee Valley's [Irrigation Design Guide](#) or Eartheasy's [DriIrrigation](#) information for guidance on putting together your own system.
3. **Purchase a readymade drip irrigation kit:** If you don't want to put a drip irrigation system together yourself, consider choosing a drip irrigation kit that comes with everything you need to get started. The [Irrigation Direct Drip Irrigation Kit for Container Gardening](#). (\$20), and the [DIG Irrigation GE 200 Complete Drip and Micro Sprayer Kit](#) for lawn and garden (\$45) are two great options. Use this [drip irrigation wizard](#) to help design your system depending on the size of your space and the types of plants you want to grow.
4. **Manage your drip irrigation system properly:** It's crucial to manage your system correctly in order to achieve the greatest water savings. To get some valuable information about drip irrigation system management, check out this guide to [getting the most out of your home irrigation system](#).
5. **Advocate for drip irrigation on public lands in your community:** Tell your state representatives you want water-efficient irrigation like drip irrigation on public lands. Start by selecting the right representative from the government's [master list](#) of representatives, and then writing letters or send emails expressing your views. Additionally, support groups that work for environmental improvements and water conservation, including [Earth First](#), [Greenpeace](#), and the [Sierra Club](#).

Dig Deeper: Drip Irrigation for Lawn and Garden

- Learn about the basic [Components of a Drip Irrigation System](#).
- Visit the USGS Water School to learn more about [drip irrigation techniques](#).
- Discover [100 ways to save water while caring for your landscape](#).
- Learn more about water wastage worldwide, and create the perfect strategy for [saving the world, drip by drip](#).
- Educate yourself further about the science of [drip irrigation](#) for landscapes.

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