

When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world. John Muir



TERRABYTE 03.06 – ADJUST YOUR SPRINKLERS

I'm tired of potential clients who complain, "the plants/grass/trees in my garden just aren't working." What exactly do you mean by NOT WORKING? How frequently do you water the garden/grass/trees and at what time of day? Is your irrigation on an automatic timer? When did you last adjust this timer? These are simple questions, but you'd be amazed at how few people actually can answer them. And program a timer? HA! Most of the people I talk to haven't ever opened up their irrigation control box and peered inside, let alone ventured to push a button. For the record, I'm not in a stone-casting mode, because honestly I wouldn't want anyone watching me try to use the remote for the digital cable.

However, not understanding the television is a bit different. Nothing suffers or dies when the TIVO is not properly programmed, but plants do suffer and die when the irrigation system or controller is not performing. Mosquitoes and other pests spawn in overly wet turf grass areas. Fungus and mold build up on and around home foundations and walls, and blights spread through the garden, transmitted on wet leaves. Even when the irrigation appears to be working, but the garden is really being over-watered, plants grow unnaturally quickly, attracting opportunistic bugs and pests to their weak, super-saturated foliage. Munched, defoliated plants are not a pretty sight.

To the uninformed it appears that the plants/grass/trees AREN'T WORKING. But in fact, it's really the irrigation system gone amiss. You must resolve to get to know your system and ultimately to reduce the amount of water being used in your garden by turning down and adjusting your sprinklers.

The first step toward making your irrigation work FOR you, is to introduce yourself to the controller box. You paid for the thing. Take out the manual and read it! Then GO OUTSIDE (yes, into your garden) and LOOK at those sprinklers. Are they on at night or during the day? How long are they running and what kind of plants are they watering? Are they hitting the sidewalk, driveway, or house? Are they popping up all the way or are they blocked, backfiring, and sputtering? Is anything broken? (You'll know because the ground will be VERY wet and/or you'll have a geyser of water spurting up.)

