



# TOWN OF WESTON

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## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
**TO:** Planning Board  
**CC:** Select Board  
**FROM:** Imaikalani Aiu, Town Planner on Behalf of Water Working Group  
**RE:** **Proposed Outdoor Water Conservation Measures**

Chair Primer and Members of the Planning Board

The Weston Water Working Group, met on September 17<sup>th</sup> and October 4<sup>th</sup> 2021 to review the proposed Outdoor Water Conservation Measures being considered by the Planning Board in lieu of the obsolete irrigation well policy. These proposed measures were taken from the best practices used by the EPA and the EPA Watersense program. After considering the potential water savings, applicability to Weston, and enforcement feasibility, the Group recommended the following:

Adopt the following as standard Planning Board conditions for landscapes:

1. Use only below ground trickle irrigation systems – not above ground automatic irrigation - to automatically irrigate plant and shrub beds.
2. Use EPA Water Sense certified weather-based irrigation smart controllers with and leak detection. Pressure regulators, spray heads, and nozzles must be as labeled EPA WaterSense components.
3. Install a minimum of 6-8 inches of topsoil rich in organic matter in new lawn and bed areas.
4. Use low water usage seed mixes which have deep roots and high drought resistance like fescue. Seed blends such as those recommended by A-LIST (Alliance for Low Input Sustainable Turf) or TWCA (Turfgrass Water Conservation Alliance) are good examples. Avoid grass with shallow roots which require regular watering like Kentucky blue grass. Sod and pre-cut turf are not allowed unless there is documentation that the product contains only low water usage – drought resistant grasses.
5. Recirculate water in decorative fountains, ponds, and waterfalls. Design of these features should not allow over splash. Use timer to shut off water features when not required (sleeping hours, vacation, when at work, etc.) Check water recirculation systems annually for leaks.

Additionally, adopt the following as standard Planning Board conditions for existing landscapes:

6. If the lawn exists prior to the required review by the Planning Board, the Board may request that core samples will be taken on a 100 SF grid and recorded for submission to the Planning Board to determine the average depth of the existing topsoil layer. Depending on the depth of the topsoil layer, the Planning Board may direct the lawn to be removed and replanted with 6” topsoil and low water usage/drought resistant seed mix.

Adopt the following as Planning Board Guidelines for landscapes:

7. Minimize clearing of healthy native trees and vegetation.
8. Aerate soil using core aeration method 1-2 times a year in turf areas to introduce oxygen, water, and nutrients deeper into the soil.
9. Set controllers to water only in the morning before 10:00 am.
10. Maximize the use of climate appropriate, native plants.
11. Plant lawn on slopes which are less than 1:3 (rise to run) to avoid wasting water through runoff.
12. Avoid planting lawn in places where grass will not thrive such as under large trees, in high traffic areas, etc.
13. Minimize lawn areas which require above ground automatic irrigation.
14. Maintain 2"-3" of natural (not treated or dyed) mulch to planting beds.
15. Maximize hydro-zoning, a strategy which clusters together plants with similar water needs for more efficient irrigation.
16. All hand hoses should have on-off nozzle attached.
17. Consider using a landscape designer that is certified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) WaterSense Irrigation Program or is familiar with this program (Certification preferred)