

## FACT SHEET

### Watering Grass Seed

#### Modified Phase I Water Restrictions

***Are you establishing a new lawn, renovating a poor-performing lawn, or simply overseeding an existing lawn?*** The answer to this question determines whether extra watering is allowed.

#### **Seeding a New Lawn (Establishing a New Lawn)**

The entire area contains no plant material, and grass seed is being used to create a lawn.

- In this situation, the entire area qualifies for the District's "new plant establishment" exemption (please refer to the fact sheet devoted to this subject).

#### **Reseeding a Poor-Performing Lawn (Renovating a Poor-Performing Lawn)**

There are bare patches or visible thinning, but a lawn is already there, more or less. Perhaps there was damage to the grass due to a recent weed infestation, pest problem or lawn disease. Perhaps foot traffic or improper use of lawn chemicals caused injury to the roots or rhizomes as well as the grass blades. Perhaps too much water, too little water or a hard freeze has killed some of the grass.

- If at least 50% of a lawn area has been reduced to "bare dirt" and grass seed is being used to restore it, use of the irrigation zone associated with that area qualifies for the District's "new plant establishment" exemption (please refer to the fact sheet devoted to this subject).
- If less than 50% of an irrigation zone has been affected, only the seeded patches within that area qualify for the District's "new plant establishment" exemption. This means the patches must be watered by some targeted means, such as handwatering or a small hose-end sprinkler.

#### **Overseeding an Existing Lawn**

This is different than overseeding a golf course as part of a fall transition program (in such a program, a cool-weather grass is added to the warm-weather grass to protect it from foot traffic and cart damage when it goes semi-dormant in the winter). Overseeding an existing lawn is sometimes used to improve the appearance of the grass, but this **\*does not qualify\*** for the "new plant establishment" exemption.

- If an existing lawn is overseeded, it may only be watered according to the normal irrigation schedule. If the seed is gently worked into the lawn (so that existing grass provides some shade to the seed, helping to keep the soil moist while it germinates), normal irrigation may be enough.
- There are several low-water or no-water alternatives to overseeding, including: appropriate fertilization (test the soil, contacting the local UF-IFAS extension service for assistance), application of an iron compound (especially to improve winter color), mowing high (especially to reduce stress to the grass during hot or dry weather) and spray-on paint designed for use on grass.

If you have any questions about how these or other Modified Phase I Water Restrictions apply to your facility, please call 1-800-848-0499 during normal business hours or send an inquiry to [Water.Restrictions@WaterMatters.org](mailto:Water.Restrictions@WaterMatters.org).