

Drought Stress

What is a drought - an extended period of months or years when a region notes a deficiency in its water supply. Generally, this occurs when a region receives consistently below average precipitation. Although droughts can persist for several years, even a short, intense drought can cause significant damage to your lawn.

During time of drought, you need to pay particular attention to your lawn maintenance. Mow as high as possible to reduce stress on the grass. Water thoroughly, but stretch out the times between watering as much as you can.

Severe drought to your lawn is a horrible thing to watch. The grass just keeps getting browner and you can't control it. During drought conditions your lawn will suffer, but how do you know if your grass has gone dormant or actually expired?

The true is, you'll have to wait and see. Once the drought is over and some soaking rain arrived, you'll either see the grass start to come back to life or it'll stay brown. It's going to take more than one soaking rain to bring your grass from dormancy, so wait for a few good rains before you panic. If indeed, the grass doesn't recover, you can seed those spots with a more drought-tolerant variety of grass.

Drought vs Dormancy

Dormancy - it's physiological; do not attempt to bring grass out of dormancy and force plant into active growth as this will weaken it.

Drought - it's dying back of the plant or thinning out.; reducing population to increase survival chances.

Watering during drought

Afternoon

- Evaporation caused by wind and sun is at a maximum
- Wind can disrupt sprinkler patterns
- Drought or stress symptoms are high in afternoon, resulting in reduced water absorption
- Acceptable: Syringing or light watering; which can alleviate heat stress by wetting enough to cool grass surface

Evening

- Water soaked lawns in evening encourage insects and disease

Morning

- This is the best time to water
- Take advantage of less wind, milder temperatures, adequate water pressure

How Often To Water?

Answer: When the lawn needs it!

- Lawns should be watered when they dry out
- Wilting and resilience are symptoms of lack of water
- The Bottom Line: Water when “Mother Nature” does not supply enough to the grass plants