**Comply with Stage 2, Prepare for Stage 3**

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In recognition of the general compliance with drought management rules and a willingness to consider stakeholder input, SAWS has changed the sprinkling hours for Stage 2. You can now irrigate from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. in the morning and 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. on you watering day.

That is the good news. The bad news is if rain-free forecasts prove to be true, we can expect to be in Stage 3 Restrictions sometime this spring. Stage 3 means that sprinkler irrigation will be limited to once every 2 weeks on your designated watering day.

Here is the information on Stage 2 Restrictions, which are still in effect. You may irrigate the lawn with sprinklers once per week based on the last digit of your address. Addresses that end in 0 or 1 water on Monday, 2 and 3 irrigate on Tuesday, addresses that end with 4 and 5 have Wednesday, 6 and 7 may sprinkle on Thursday, and Friday is reserved for addresses that end in 8 or 9.

As bad as once every 2 weeks sounds, lawns on 6 inches of soil will survive. Lawns with less soil and/or poorly functioning irrigation systems will have dry spots.

Take advantage of the freedom to hand water at any time to give those dry spots a little supplemental application of water every week.

The change in watering hours means that hose draggers (those with no irrigation systems) do not have to rise so early in the morning on their watering day. It also means that leaks will be more easily detected.

Other changes in the restrictions allow residential fountains to be operated at any stage in a drought and cars can be washed at home once per week on Saturday or Sunday as long as there is no water waste.

**Landscape Tasks**

Some lawns will be growing now. Mow St. Augustine at 3 inches tall, Zoysia at 2 inches and Bermuda at 1.5 inches or less. Buffalo grass should be mowed at 5 inches or taller for best performance.

If you have a drip irrigation system, begin using it early this spring if it is dry so that the roots develop thickly under the water drip area. It does not work to wait until deep in the drought.

The hummingbirds should be in San Antonio. Put out your sugar water feeders with one part sugar and 4 parts water by volume.

The tropical and sub-tropical plants such as bougainvillea and oriental hibiscus can be moved out of shelter and into their summer locations now.