

Auto Garden Watering

- Installing an automatic irrigation system, which is programmed to water the garden before 10am and after 5pm, can save up to 70% of water used for irrigation as losses through evaporation and heat are avoided.
- Try to avoid watering the garden during strong winds, as it can waste up to 70% of the water you spray onto the garden.
- Water the base of plants, not the leaves. This provides water directly to the roots, where it is needed most.
- Removing misters and installing a drip irrigation system brings the water to the plants most efficiently and can save a lot of water.
- Plan your garden wisely, try to stay with indigenous plants that fit the climate and don't need excess watering. Put the plants in groups of irrigation needs so that different parts of the garden can be set up to their needs. Giving the plants sufficient water but not overwatering them.
- Try and find an alternative watering source from the mains. For example borehole, rain water harvesting or a grey water system, as this will save money and reduce consumption of potable mains water.

Application: in all gardens

Ease: 3/5

Availability: 5/5

Factors to consider:

Plan your garden according to plants and use the correct irrigation for the right areas to maximise water savings. Make sure that plants are not overwatered and irrigation is adjusted according to seasons.

Cost: drip irrigation can be calculated with R50/meter, installed. It is extremely difficult to estimate a price on irrigation systems as they can vary from R500 to R500 000 depending on garden size, plantation and irrigation components used.

Payback: like the costs this is difficult to say. It depends on the system which was installed previously and on the irrigation type being installed. For example one impact sprayer uses 1000 litres/h compared to drip irrigation that would only use 100 litres/h to cover the same area.

Requirements to meet criteria:

- Auto watering system adjusted according to season and weather (e.g. rain sensors so during rainy days the irrigation stays off)
- Alternatively to this a complete drip irrigation system could be installed
- Or the existing irrigation is changed to rain harvesting and gray water usage



"Using rain or grey water for garden irrigation can seriously save water"