GUIDELINES FOR EFFICIENT OPERATION OF AUTOMATIC UNDERGROUND IRRIGATION SYSTEMS

The programming and operation of your automatic underground irrigation system will be dictated by a variety of factors. Your automatic controller should have all the required features to allow you to fine tune your system's performance for maximum efficiency. The following factors should be taken into consideration when programming:

1. Time of year as well as past, current and future weather conditions.

2. Type of landscape material being watered. Lawns, shrubs, flowers and trees all have different needs.

3. Type of equipment i.e., rotary head, spray (mist) head or drip tubing. All of these have different application rates and should be timed differently.

4. The profile of your landscape also should be considered. Sun exposure, hills and slopes, low areas as well as soil types (loam, clay, sand) all need to be accounted for when making your programming decisions.

5. Your controller should be capable of independent timing and scheduling of each zone in your system. Each zone should represent a specific part of your landscape i.e., front lawn, back lawn, back bed, etc. Each zone should be programmed in accordance with the afore-mentioned criteria.

The following chart will provide you with some basic guidelines for programming your sprinkler system. You should be tweaking your program regularly, weekly at the very least. You can cause as much harm to your landscape with too much water as you can with too little. Additionally, water is a precious and expensive resource and should not be wasted.

SEASONAL CHART

May - June	**-**	**1 - 3 cycles per week maximum if needed**
July - August	**-**	**Every other day if needed**
Sept - Oct	**-**	**1 - 2 cycles per week maximum if needed**

In dry conditions, lawns and flowers which have shallow root systems may need to be watered more frequently due to sandy soil conditions than trees and shrubs which have deeper root systems. Generally, you would water lawns and flowers for less time more often and trees and shrubs for longer times less frequently.

ZONE CHART

Type of Sprinkler	Area being watered	Run time
Rotary	**Lawn**	**30 mins**
Spray	**Lawn**	**10-15 mins**
Spray	**Flowers**	**10-15 mins**
Spray	**Shrubs & Trees**	**30 mins (less cycles per week)**
Drip tubing	**Trees, Shrubs & Flowers**	**60 mins (less cycles Per week)**

Your controller should be capable of running at least two independent programs and have both a working rain sensor and a competent manager.

This information, while being somewhat generic, gives you a solid starting point on the way to operating your irrigations system in an efficient and community friendly manner.