



## Spring into action with irrigation system checkup

Activities in the garden will be increasing before too long, so while there's still a bit of a break in the schedule, now is a good time to check your irrigation system to ensure it's ready for another successful gardening season.

Water is life when it comes to gardening, so it's important for an automated sprinkler system to be in tip-top shape. First, check all the valve boxes for rodent nests and other debris.

Next, make a visual inspection of the sprinkler heads. Look for those heads that may be broken or have become covered up during the winter season. Make sure the heads are in good repair and remove dirt and debris that may be blocking them. You'll also want to make sure the heads are properly oriented. The landscape doesn't benefit if the irrigation system is watering the driveway instead of the lawn and garden.

The next step is to turn on the main water source and slowly fill the system. Be sure to leave open any manual drain valves on the system to allow air to escape as pipes fill with water. Once the water starts to drain from the valves, close them.

Once the valves are closed, turn on each station manually and walk through the yard to check for head leaks and ensure the heads are providing adequate coverage to their area and are closing properly. If you detect any issues, identify the problems and begin making repairs yourself. If the problem is significant and you're unable to complete the repairs on your own, go ahead and call in a professional.

Most of us don't like wasting any kind of natural resources, especially one as valuable as water. This is why a rain sensor on the irrigation system is a good idea. Most systems are on a timer and turn on like clockwork. However, a rain sensor will shut off the system when it's raining, thus reducing water waste

The idea of an irrigation system is to help the gardener with proper and efficient watering. It can be a waste of water and energy if your system isn't running at 100%. Performing a checkup at the beginning of the gardening season is the first step to a successful season.

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