This month, and really most of the summer, has been hot and dry which can cause your lawn to start to develop brown spots. It is important to remember that these brown spots will go away once the temperatures start to decrease and the air isn’t so dry. In the meantime, avoid overwatering your lawn and stick to the three-days per week watering schedule available at eccv.org. Instead of running your whole sprinkler system more often, an easy fix could be to hand-water your lawn’s problem areas. If dry spots start to become consistent, this could be an indication of a larger issue in your system. We have put together a checklist on how to spot inefficiencies in your sprinkler system. You can access it by visiting our website at www.eccv.org/conservation.

Sprinkler controllers have gotten a lot more sophisticated. While they can do more, that also means they can get a little complicated to set properly. If you have a smart controller it is important to make sure it is set to the correct watering durations for your sprinkler heads. If a setting is off it could lead to higher use, higher bills, and not provide much benefit to your lawn.

Smart controllers are great because many of them adjust based on the weather. However, they don’t understand the concept of droughts. In prolonged periods of hot and dry conditions, making some manual adjustments to your controller can go a long way in conserving water:

- Ensure you have entered in the correct watering days based on your three-days per week watering schedule.
- Check to make sure you have inputted your landscape information correctly.
- If you are noticing higher use than normal then you can use some of the bypass features on your controller to stop it from overwatering dry areas.

We know setting up your smart controller correctly can be tricky. If you have any questions about your controller, how to set it up, how to use the bypass features, or what settings you should be entering for your lawn and sprinkler head then email conservation@eccv.org. We are here to help.
A common reaction to lawns starting to lose their luster in droughts is to give them extra water to compensate for the lack of rain. This may hurt more than it helps. Soil can only drink in so much water at a time. Simply watering longer likely means water is running off the lawn once the soil becomes saturated. The water that is absorbed stays near the surface, and that prevents grass roots from extending deeper into the ground, making the grass less tolerant of heat. Watering each part of a lawn in three separate cycles, with an hour between each cycle, gives the soil time to soak up water and push it deeper.

Since Colorado is experiencing a drought, efficient watering is of the utmost importance. The Cycle and Soak method makes grass stronger and able to withstand the hot and dry air. Find out more at eccv.org/conservation.

The 2020 watering season has delivered one of the heaviest water use summers on record. When looking at ECCV water production, which changes as necessary to meet demand, May 2020 saw more than 350 million gallons of water produced. That’s nearly 60 million gallons more than what we typically see in May. June provided some relief with enough rain to help usage return to more normal levels. Since then, it’s been steadily hot and steadily dry. The monsoon never really showed up in July, we entered a drought, and demand once again achieved levels not recently seen. At the time of publication, August totals look to surpass recent years as well.

Until there’s a sustained change in the weather, drought conditions may only worsen. Customers are urged to water efficiently and only use what’s needed to keep lawns healthy. Since summer is coming to an end, the shorter days and cooler nights mean your lawn will need less water than it has in the last couple of months. Check out the other articles in this newsletter and eccv.org/conservation for details on how to keep lawns and gardens happy while cutting back on water use.