



Professional Property Inspections

LAWN SPRINKLER SYSTEMS

Lawn sprinkler systems are often part of our home inspections. Some of them are small with only a few zones and some of them can have 30 or 40 zones (for larger luxury Properties).

As I'm sure you realize, lawn sprinklers have to be "blown out" at the end of every season in order to avoid freeze ups and broken pipes. The blowouts usually happen in November in preparation for freezing temperatures in winter. It's usually fairly economical (\$100 or less for average properties) to blow out sprinkler systems.

In the spring, it's a good idea to have a sprinkler company turn the system on and check for proper operation on all of the zones. This is also fairly economical.

We often find sprinkler systems running too long making the ground soggy and prone to disease. According to the SCOTTS website recommendations, approximately 1 inch to 1 ½ inches of water every few days is a good rule of thumb. A few days between watering can make the grassroots go deeper and be healthier. In order to measure how much water your sprinkler system is delivering, you can put some cans at various locations in the yard the yard, then run the sprinklers until the water in the cans is 1 or 1 ½ inches deep and keep track of the time. That is the amount of time you should set sprinkler system to run. Of course, all lawns are different, some soils contain a lot of clay and some soils contain a lot of sand. So water demands can be different.

Although it's not code everywhere, it's a good idea to have a backflow preventer on the sprinkler system. A backflow preventer stops water from reversing its flow from the lawn and back into your own drinking water as well as the public water pipes. A backflow preventer is typically installed close to the main water valve by a plumber.

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