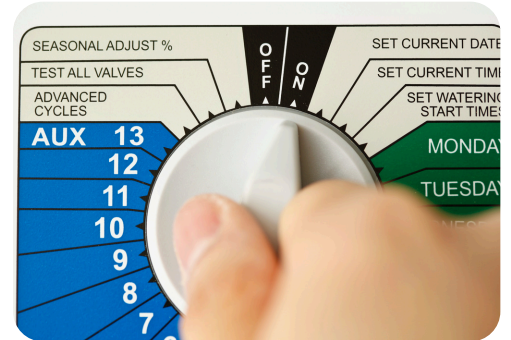


### What is 'Cycle and Soak' irrigation scheduling?

Cycle and Soak irrigation scheduling is an industry term for dividing a single scheduled irrigation run time into two or more shorter run times on a given watering day. This scheduling method encourages irrigation water to move further down the soil so that more water can reach the lawn's root zone. While Cycle and Soak scheduling can be used to increase water efficiency on your landscape, it can also make your lawn more resilient to impacts from drought and plant disease.



### Why should I program my controller using 'Cycle and Soak' scheduling?

In Bozeman, our landscapes are generally composed of clay, which is a very fine soil type. Clay soils are great for holding water, but water infiltrates them very slowly. Sprinklers generally emit large volumes of water very quickly, and that water is often applied to the landscape faster than it can be absorbed by the soil. When this happens, the result is runoff on your landscape. To prevent runoff and water waste, we recommend implementing a Cycle and Soak irrigation schedule into your existing irrigation program.

### Instructions for creating a 'Cycle and Soak' schedule:

**Step 1:** Using your irrigation controller, run each zone for 10 to 15 minutes.

**Step 2:** Keeping track of time, record when signs of pooling/runoff occur in each zone. This is called the 'time to runoff' and represents the maximum amount of time each zone should run before water waste occurs.

**Step 3:** Using your controller, adjust the run time for each zone so that it does not exceed the time to runoff. The time to runoff will influence how many cycles of irrigation you need to run. For example, if a zone's time to runoff is 6 minutes but the lawn requires 12 minutes to maintain its appearance, the zone run time should be set to 6 minutes and should run for two total cycles per irrigation day.

**Step 4:** Once each zone run time has been adjusted, program additional start times on your controller. If your landscape requires two cycles of irrigation, you will need to program two start times per day. If your landscape's time to runoff requires three cycles to be run per irrigation day, you will need to schedule three total start times. It is recommended that you allow at least 30 minutes between watering cycles for a given zone so that the irrigation water has adequate time to soak into the soil.

**Did you know?** Many smart irrigation controllers can help you seamlessly integrate Cycle and Soak irrigation scheduling into your existing irrigation program. The City of Bozeman offers a rebate of up to \$250 for the installation of EPA WaterSense® labeled controllers, many of which can be controlled by your smartphone. Learn more and access the rebate application by visiting [www.bozemanwater.com](http://www.bozemanwater.com).