



## The Water Cronicles

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### What to do with the dead debris

By Chris Vasecka

Hope your March madness picks paid off. Now let's get serious about spring. The snow is leaving us with many unknowns. These unknowns consist of the plow demolishing the lawn late last fall, only to be covered up with snow. The neighbor kids using the back lawn as a snowmobile track, the Southside junipers and arborvitaes burnt from the winter sun. All of these things have us spinning our heads to search from which to work on first. As in my last issue we need to have an organized game plan to tackle our spring plant problems. Planting seed in early spring seems like a great idea, but will end in frustration as that area will be disturbed too much before the seed even thinks of germinating which will not be until late May. The snowmobile path in the yard may look like dead grass that you should rake up right away, actually the dead grass is protecting the crowns underneath which are still viable. Don't disturb these until the night-time lows are above 40 degrees. The same goes with animal trails in the yard. It looks as though they ate all of the grass. They usually leave the crowns alone, which can grow new shoots. The dead grass is a protective layer, which will keep the frost and cold off of the new shoots. Premature reaction to lawn conditions can be destructive to damaged grass. Take it easy and work on other projects. As far as the burnt foliage on the Southside plants, allow them to come out of the freeze. Typically we do not prune these plants until June. Once the temps have warmed up, individually prune out the dead brown leaves. It will take until mid to late June before those areas will grow back in. Arborvitaes and junipers are aggressive plants when the temps are above 70 degrees. Its OK to lightly rake the rest of the lawn and remove any unsightly debris that may still be hanging around. In the May newsletter we will talk more about herbicides and fertilizer. Until then Happy Gardening.

### What can I do about these High water rates?

Early reports on city pricing for water shows that on average the price of water is going to continue rising each year by 15%. The price of sewage is some areas has doubled and even tripled. How can a homeowner battle some of these upcoming bills? Most cities charge for water and sewage usage by the actual water meter reading. No matter if the water goes directly to sewage or not you will pay for both ends. Some cities will now allow you to install an

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additional water meter, which is for all external outdoor water use. This will allow you a deduction on your sewage charge. These meters can run between \$200 to \$400 and the installation. If this is not an option take a look at some of the suggestions below.

#### Indoor Water Usage.

Your home will account for over 30% of your water usage. If you have not taken advantage of some of the water saving devices, now may be the time to look at water saving faucets, showerheads and toilets. This could save you up to 40% on your indoor water use. Leaks which have not been attended to can double, even triple a normal water bill. Shut off all water sources in the house and go to your water meter to see if all gauges have stopped moving. Some leaks are so small that they are not visible. Your water meter can detect small drips of water. If you are unsure call the city to have comparisons of you water bill with others of the same size family in the city.

#### Outdoor Water Usage

Here is where the rubber meets the road. If you irrigate your lawn, your summer watering use will become 70% of your total water use for the year. This is the area where you can create a financial impact. If you are currently watering with hose and sprinkler you could be over watering by as much as 60%. You may want to consider installing an irrigation system. This will give you better control over you lawn watering needs. If you have an underground sprinkler system you could be over watering by as much as 40%. The only way you can recapture that 40% is by having an analysis done on the property and irrigation system. Use Your Water Right provides this process at a very reasonable rate. Use Your Water Right will provide a professional through onsite evaluation of your soil, grass, shade quality and water output of your irrigation system. This information is inputted into our web based water time calculator at [www.useyourwaterright.com](http://www.useyourwaterright.com). New info will be provided on how to set the irrigation clock and how to adjust through out the year. This analysis can save you that 40% and put up to \$300.00 back in your wallet each year, while saving thousands of gallons of water.

Go green by saving blue, can mean more than just being environmentally conscience but saving money in the process.

For more info go to [www.useyourwaterright.com](http://www.useyourwaterright.com) or call (320) 310-4241.

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