

Drip Irrigation for Roses and Containers

Roses do not “fare” well with water showering their foliage, especially from a sprinkler or lawn irrigation system. These shrubs are extremely susceptible to many foliar fungal diseases. Two ways to avoid this is to plant your rose bed in an area where you can shut off the sprinkler head or plant the roses in large containers. Both ways are very adaptable to drip irrigation. When watering containers, remember that containers need to be watered more often during our hot months, and water should flow freely out the base – **never use saucers below the pots!**

The **KEY** to using this type of system is to use **SHRUB EMMITTERS** at the end of the $\frac{1}{4}$ ” tubing that delivers the water directly to the plant(s). With this type of emitter, you can deliver $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 gallon of water to the plant(s) in 6 to 10 minutes. Program your timer for this to occur in the morning on a daily basis. During the very hot months, you may need to do it twice a day, especially to containers.

Select the outside faucet nearest the area, the bed, or group of containers. The set-up is as follows:

- 1) Lay the $\frac{1}{2}$ ” and $\frac{1}{4}$ ” tubing in the sun to soften for flexibility
- 2) Install a “Y” attachment with shut-off valves into the above-mentioned faucet
- 3) Attach the timer
- 4) Connect the swivel end of the filter
- 5) Install a pressure regulator
- 6) Attach the mainline tubing (1/2”) next with a connector and unroll it to the area you are going to water (along the bed or to the containers)
- 7) Cut off the excess and close with an end fitting (landscape pins may be necessary to hold down the above tubing)
- 8) Connect the $\frac{1}{4}$ ” tubing that will deliver water to the plants (in addition to the emitters, you will need $\frac{1}{4}$ ” transfer barbs, goof plugs, $\frac{1}{4}$ ” elbows, hold-downs and tubing stakes, a punch, and the roll of $\frac{1}{4}$ ” tubing)
- 9) Measure the distance from the mainline tubing to each plant and/or container and mark it
- 10) Using the punch, make a hole in the tubing
- 11) Insert a transfer barb at the end of the measured $\frac{1}{4}$ ” tubing and the emitter at the other end
- 12) Insert the transfer barb into the hole punched in the main-line tubing and the emitter into the container or shrub using the stake or pin to hold it in place
- 13) Repeat this process until all of the emitters are in

Turn on the faucet and, with the timer on manual, check that all the emitters are working properly. Then, program the timer according to the time of day and the time you want the emitters to run.

Additional Resource:

OSU Extension Fact Sheet: [BAE 1511](#)