

## The cost of Green Grass#

---

More and more small water systems in Nebraska are becoming metered systems, either due to lack of water quantity or due to the need for loan and grant assistance. I have attended several community meetings to discuss the issue of lawn watering and how much is it going to cost to keep my lawn green. I wish I had a \$1.00 for every time I have heard that the whole town is going to dry up and all of our yards will be brown because no one will be able to afford to water their lawn.

I recently assisted a community with this very issue and we read the water meter 2 times at a residence just prior to the water sprinklers running and immediately after they shut off. The cost for the water in this community is \$2.15 per thousand gallons. Using the data we collected, figuring the lawn needed 1 inch of water per week, **in a worst case scenario of no rainfall for seven months**, the cost to

Actual readings and usage from 5,560 sq. ft. lawn in Bellwood w/sprinklers set to apply 1" per week

<b>Sprinkler System RUN #1</b>	
Meter Reading Start	135348.2
Meter Reading Finish	136295.5
Gallons Water Used	947.3
Water Cost	\$ 2.04
<b>Sprinkler System RUN #2</b>	
Meter Reading Start	136295.5
Meter Reading Finish	137236
Gallons Water Used	940.5
Water Cost	\$ 2.02
<b>Weekly Total (1" of water)</b>	
Gallons Used	1887.8
Water Cost	\$ 4.06
<b>Yearly Total w/no rainfall for seven months (28 weeks) Apr.1st to Nov. 1st</b>	
Gallons Used	52858.4
Water Cost (\$2.15/1,000 gals.)	\$ 113.65
Gallons of Water used per sq. ft. ( 52858 gals./5560 sq. ft.)	9.50
Cost per Sq Ft. for water	\$ 0.02
Cost of chemicals applied by custom lawn care service (\$300.00 for 6,000 sq. ft lawn in Bellwood)	\$ 0.05

water the lawn for the seven month duration came to \$.02 per sq. ft. of lawn. The cost of lawn service for their fertilizer, pesticide, herbicide, etc. was approx. \$.05 per sq. ft. That does not include mowing. Judging by this, it doesn't appear that the cost of the water would be a big deterrent to keeping a lawn looking nice.

The following shows the meter readings from both sprinkler runs and the water costs. The sprinklers were set to run 2 times per week putting on a total of 1" per week.