



INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR NMID PRESSURIZED IRRIGATION SYSTEM

The Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District presently provides water to pressurized irrigation systems on approximately 15,000 parcels of land in the Treasure Valley from approximately April 15 to October 15 each year, depending on water supplies. That means during those six months thousands of acres of grass, landscaping, shrubbery and garden land are being irrigated with non potable canal water diverted from the Boise River rather than pristine municipal drinking water pumped from the valley's groundwater aquifer to serve domestic needs.

The result is an annual savings of more than 5 Billion gallons of precious drinking water. This annual ground water savings is viewed by growth planning experts as especially crucial in a valley where demand for domestic water is expected to increase by up to 80 percent by the year 2025. We at Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District are proud to be able to provide this contribution to the future well being of the Treasure Valley.

Another benefit of pressurized irrigation is that the average cost to irrigate urban lots typically is less expensive than a system that uses more expensive domestic water. At present, the approximate annual cost for residents using NMID pressurized irrigation on a 1/4th acre lot cost for the urban system is \$90.00.

While there is no doubt about the value of pressurized irrigation systems, they do represent a type of urban irrigation with which many people are really not familiar, especially those with urban backgrounds or who may have moved to the Treasure Valley from other parts of the country.

It is important to realize that residential subdivision pressurized urban irrigation systems need to function like those used by farmers. In this type of environment all users, individually or as a subdivision, must cooperate and work together to make sure water availability and use benefit equally all users in the District.

This contrasts with the "use as much as you can pay for," for-profit municipal water system with which most homeowners are familiar.

Pressurized urban irrigation systems using canal water involve irrigation practices that may at first seem foreign to home owners used to municipal water supply sprinkler systems.

Most importantly, the myth that you should only irrigate your lawn at night does not apply when you are using pressurized systems that make use of canal water.

For example. Most people with irrigation systems fed by a municipal system typically run lawn sprinklers at night. But with pressurized systems using water from canals flowing 24/7, users can and should irrigate at any time day or night. That way demand on the pumping stations feeding the District's pressurized systems is spread out over the entire 24 hour day which minimizes the impact. You will often see homeowners with pressurized systems watering their lawns, gardens and landscaping during the middle of the day. That is perfectly normal.

If everyone on a pressurized system sets their sprinkler system to come on at the same time, such as at night, it can actually create such a demand that it will cause pressure and water volume in the system to severely decline. It can even cause pumps to fail.

Some other important factors in pressurized irrigation systems include:

- The biggest challenge is over-demand during a specific time frame which can create too large of a demand on the system which in turn means water pressure will drop significantly. To avoid that, we recommend that subdivision users use an odd-even address approach to irrigating lots in their subdivisions.
- Debris down to 1/16th of an inch is filtered from the water and delivered at a pressure of 40-60 PSI (pounds per square inch) which is equivalent to the pressure of a municipal system.
- The District's water rights dictate the flow rate of water to which each user is entitled. That means NMID pressurized systems are typically designed to deliver no more than 5-7 gallons of water per minute to an individual watering station. Since the system serves all users in a subdivision, that 5-7 gallons per minute rate must then be multiplied times the total number of users in the subdivision. Excessive diversion rates by individual properties cuts down the number of properties that can receive their share of the water at any given time.
- Multiple residential subdivisions may share a common pump station. That means the subdivisions need to work together to manage the system as a single entity. **It is the homeowners' responsibility to establish a specific water use rotation, such as odd/even watering schedule.**
- Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District will perform all repairs to the main system, and the cost of those repairs will be included in the assessments for operation and maintenance of that system. It is your responsibility to maintain the various elements of your property's sprinkler system such as lawn and garden sprinklers.

- Many individual residential lots have a water filter on their private sprinkler system, where it connects to the subdivision pressurized system. These filters need to be checked and serviced to prevent them from becoming clogged, which can dramatically reduce water pressure to your sprinklers. NMID regularly gets calls about pressurized system problems which turn out to be a clogged filter at the connection point on the individual property. It is the homeowner's responsibility to keep the filter clean.

Most questions regarding your individual pressurized system can be answered by your subdivision home owners association. If there is a problem with your system – i.e., water pressure is low or no water is being supplied – that is the first place to call.

You should call us at 466-0663 if you have questions concerning items such as pressure, leaks and design specifications or system line locations. You must call us at least two working days before you dig in an area where irrigation system main lines are buried. If you do not call, you are responsible for any damages that may result.

If you have other questions regarding pressurized irrigation systems managed by Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District, we would be happy to help. Please call 466-0663 during normal business hours.