

Irrigation Systems

By state law, all irrigation systems connected to the Town of Hillsborough utilities system must have a separate water meter. For information on having an irrigation-only meter installed, contact the Utilities Department at 919-296-9630 or 919-296-9631.

See below for additional information related to irrigation systems.

Use

Under normal conditions, spray irrigation is limited to 1 inch or three application days per week between 8 p.m. and 9 a.m. Even-numbered properties may use spray systems on Sundays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Odd-numbered properties may spray Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. Irrigation systems must have rain or moisture sensors. See irrigation system requirements, [Section 14-19](#), in the [Hillsborough Code of Ordinances](#).

Leaks

You or the company that maintains your irrigation system are advised to regularly check for leaks. Leaks can waste a large amount of water and dollars. Account adjustments are not usually made for irrigation leaks.

Waste

Irrigation systems should be installed, maintained and operated so that water does not spray or run off onto other properties or street right-of-way areas, including sidewalks, road shoulders and roadways.

Backflow prevention

The Town of Hillsborough requires irrigation systems to have a backflow prevention device. These devices protect the public water system from potential contamination by water that has passed from public pipes into or through a private plumbing system or private equipment. The flow of water from a private system back into the public system could occur under special conditions, such as during a major water main break or firefighting.



For detailed information about the town's backflow prevention program, see:

- [FAQ: Backflow Prevention](#) in the frequently asked questions section of the town's website.
- The backflow prevention section of the [Utilities Educational Outreach](#) webpage.
- [Technical Specifications for Water and Sewer Systems](#) under the contractor documents section of the Utilities webpage.
- Cross-connection control policy: [Section 14-56](#) of the [Hillsborough Code of Ordinances](#).
- Contact Hillsborough Utilities Infrastructure Protection Supervisor Troy Miller at 919-732-9459 or troy.miller@hillsboroughnc.gov.

Local plumbing permit

The North Carolina Plumbing Code requires a permit from the local inspections department for installation of an irrigation system. The Orange County Planning and Inspections Department issues permits and performs inspections. Contact the department at 919-245-2600.

Licensing for irrigation contractors

Irrigation contractors generally are required to have a state license. Exemptions include:

- Federal and state agencies working on public property.
- Property owners performing work on their own property.
- The cost of all contracts for labor and material is under \$2,500.
- Licensed landscape architects, engineers, general contractors, and the like.
- Irrigation for certain construction, agricultural and nursery operations.

For more information, see the North Carolina Irrigation Contractors' Licensing Board website, www.nciclb.org, or contact the board at 919-872-2229 or info@nciclb.org.

Fees and other charges

The Town of Hillsborough charges a system development fee to cover the cost of water supplies, treatment facilities, pumps, piping, and other infrastructure necessary to provide service to an irrigation-only meter. The fee is the same as that for a regular water service, but sewer fees are not charged.

Irrigation-only water service is charged monthly per 1,000 gallons of water use. The town may halt irrigation-only service during water shortages, such as due to droughts. If the service is halted, the town will bill only for the actual amount of water used during the affected months. It will not charge a minimum fee during those months.

Any changes to rates and fees will occur typically at the start of a new fiscal year, July 1. For current rates, see the Utility Fee Calculations document on the town's [website](#) or contact Utilities Analyst Julie Laws.

Supplemental irrigation permit

Permits for supplemental irrigation may be purchased to protect new planting for 90 days. To be eligible, a property must have an active building permit or have had one within the previous 90 days. No permits are issued during water restrictions at Stage 2 or higher. For permit prices, see the Utility Fee Calculations document on the town's [website](#) or contact Utilities Analyst Julie Laws.

Questions and comments

We welcome your questions and feedback! Visit our website, www.hillsboroughnc.gov, or contact Utilities Analyst Julie Laws at 919-296-9630, julie.laws@hillsboroughnc.gov or the Town Hall Annex, 105 E. Corbin St. Offices hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays.