

## IRRIGATION TIMER BOXES

Timer boxes are a key part of your irrigation system, and it is important to keep an eye on whether they are working properly and understand some basics of what you can do if you suspect a problem. It is certainly worthwhile exploring whether you can fix simple problems yourself before calling in paid “experts” at considerable cost.

### Information Resources

**Timer Manuals and Information** - Most of the timer boxes in Wisteria Park are either Rain Bird or Hunter products. Model information, such as “X-Core” or “ESP Modular” can be found on the inside of the unit’s cover or on its face. Google searches for “hunter irrigation timer manual” or “rainbird irrigation timer manual” will take you to the manufacturers’ support sites and a variety of You Tube how-to videos. In order to get correct manuals, you will need to know the model name for your unit.

**Manatee County** offers a no-cost home visit by an irrigation specialist who will assess your Lot for soil condition (especially water retention) and the operation of your irrigation system. You can find information on this service at [mymanatee.org](http://mymanatee.org) ---> Departments ---> Parks and Natural Resources ---> Agriculture and Extension Services ---> Lawn and Garden.

### Triggers leading to inspection

**Power surges and interruptions** can throw off the timing cycle on some boxes by erasing the box’s date and time settings. Normally your box should display elements of current date and time (some show time and day of the week, some show complete date/time). If the date/time display is inaccurate, you can reset this information and check the other settings to make sure they haven’t been corrupted.

If there is no display of any kind, this would suggest a more powerful surge that may have tripped the box’s circuit breaker or the ground fault sensor inside your garage. Check and reset as needed.

If you are away for more extended times it is important that you can be contacted so you can arrange for help if needed. Leaving emergency contact information on the Wisteria Park Resident Directory is a good way to facilitate this.

**Thinning grass and brown areas** may be an indicator of an irrigation problem. Assessing this possibility does involve a deeper dive into the workings of your timer. You may want to review the amount of time each zone is scheduled for operation and the days of the week the system is scheduled to activate. Timers also have a manual activation button which allows you to inspect your system’s coverage.

If you need to **shut down** your system because of a broken line or gushing sprinkler, timer boxes have an “off” setting. This is usually an easily identifiable position on the main control dial.

**Final thought** – Although many landscape maintenance services are supposed to keep an eye on the operation and coverage of your irrigation system, it’s probably not a bad idea to put a reminder on your calendar to assess at your system’s operation once every few months.