

## Residential Rain and Freeze Sensors FAQ

As a follow-up action to HB 1656, TCEQ adopted rules related to landscape irrigation. These rules are intended to promote water conservation and prevent the wasting of water and are summarized as follows:

- An irrigation plan is required prior to installation of an irrigation system connected to a five-eighths inch or larger water meter.
- Beginning January 1, 2010, a licensed irrigator or irrigation technician must be on-site during the installation of the irrigation system. All other portions of the rule are effective January 1, 2009.
- All irrigation system owners or owners' representatives must be provided a drawing showing the actual installation of the irrigation system.
- Irrigation systems may not be designed to spray water on hard surfaces such as sidewalks, driveways, streets, fences, etc.
- Backflow devices must be approved by a laboratory that has capabilities for testing the backflow device in the lab and field.
- All new automatically controlled . . . during periods of rainfall. (TCEQ requires only rain or moisture shut-off devices. Irving, however, will require rain/freeze sensors on all new installations beginning January 1, 2009. In addition, all commercial, industrial, or multi-family irrigation systems installed before January 1, 2009, must have rain/freeze sensors installed within one year of such date, and all residential irrigation systems installed before January 1, 2009, must have rain/freeze sensors installed within two years of such date).

The proposed ordinance incorporates these TCEQ rules.

**Q: What is a rain/freeze sensor?**

A: Rain and freeze sensors prevent automatic irrigation systems from operating when sufficient rain has to trip the sensor or when temperatures are below freezing.

**Q: Why do we need sensors?**

A: Rain freeze sensors conserve water by preventing automatic irrigation systems from running during wet periods. Homeowners may benefit from a savings on monthly water bills. Sensors also prevent systems from running when temperatures are below freezing, reducing the incidence of ice on the roadways and sidewalks.

**Q: What is the cost of the sensors?**

A: On average, cost for the sensors runs \$18 to \$40 and installation runs \$125 to \$150.

**Q: When do the sensors have to be installed?**

A: Sensors currently on all new systems installed after January 1, 2009. Existing systems have until January 2011 to have systems installed.

**Q: Where can I purchase a rain and freeze sensor?**

A: Sensors may be purchased at Home Depot, Lowes, or any irrigation supply company. Landscape maintenance companies can also install the sensors.

**Q: What are the different types of sensors?**

A: Sensors are wireless or hard wired to provide a range of installation options.

**Q: Will the city install the sensor for me?**

A: The city will not install these sensors.

**Q: Do I need to contact the city once the sensors have been installed?**

A: It is recommended to avoid any confusion. Once installation is complete, residents are encouraged to contact the Irving Water Utilities at 972-721-2261 or send an email to [ballen@cityofirving.org](mailto:ballen@cityofirving.org). Be sure to include the name and address of the installation location and the date the installation was complete.