

## Watering RING

Water is necessary for plants to grow. We all know that. And we monitor the weather (heat, wind, precipitation) and conserve water when we can. At RING, when Mother Nature does not provide enough, watering is made easier most of the year because we have a ground hydrant near the water fountain near the Seaman entrance. Connected to this ground hydrant is a hose that connects to various lines that Arthur designed and laid some years ago. If you follow the hoses, you see one goes up and over the arbor. You shouldn't need to touch the ground hydrant or the main connectors on either side of the arbor unless, for some reason, they've all been turned off.

It's important to remember that we only have enough water pressure to operate at most about 3 hoses / sprinklers at one time, so if time is limited, prioritize your watering, and water those areas that need it most first! You can tell what plants are in most need if some are withering. The other important fact of life with the ground hydrant is that the City turns it off in October and back on in April (usually). We continue to try to get this period extended. If water is needed during the off-season, it has to be brought in from outside since the DEP has magnetically capped the fire hydrant at the Dyckman/Seaman corner.

### Two watering systems at RING

There are two basic types of watering system at RING. The spigot systems run from either side of the arbor along the north and south pathways. There are three spigots on the south side and one on the north side. At each spigot there is at least one Y connector with hoses attached so they are easy to spot. This is the most flexible system. You can water with a hand sprayer or attach a sprinkler. You can turn the spigot itself on and off, if for example, there is an emergency leak. You can see hoses and connectors at each spigot. The long handles can rotate only 90 degrees. If they are parallel with the hose (as shown here), then they are in the "on" position. If they are turned 90 degrees, that is the "off" position. They turn easily in the direction they are designed to turn. Notice there is a second Y adapter to the right, below. Both of those small valve controllers are in the "on" position as well.



We can attach sprinklers to those and place them where we want. These are good for watering the lawn. The small green sprinklers with no moving parts are good for watering on the raised beds.



There are other types of sprinkler with moving parts and hand sprayers and nozzles. When using the sprayers and nozzles, be sure to have a gentle enough spray for the plants you are watering. When turning the nozzles, do not "overscrew". Nozzles can be broken this way. Once the water is on full, don't try to open further. When finished, best to screw into "off" position.

The other type of watering system uses automatic sprinkler lines that run along the outsides of the Triangle and are turned on at the assemblies behind the walls where the arbor is anchored on either side. In the past, timers have been the method of operation, but since these break, we may switch to an on-off system using the same kinds of blue or green-handled valve controllers as the spigot system uses (above). The sprinklers themselves have been prone to vandalism and accidents and have been fixed a number of times. But when they are working, many sprinklers operate at once and lots of hard-to-reach sections of the garden get watered.

### The watering system at "The Point"

The smallest raised bed at RING, located at the east end nearest Broadway, "the Point", has its own sprinkler system. It is attached by a grey hose to the south spigot system near the Riverside entrance. There are two spigot handles, each operating a separate automatic sprinkler system for the Point. Remember that we don't have enough water pressure to operate more than 2 or 3 sprinklers/ hoses in the garden at one time.

### Circulating water in the pond

There is also a timer attached to the solar batteries in one of the smaller boxes under the arbor that turns on the pump that would send water surging from the pond through the water cleaning assembly to the right of the pond (first a vortex, then a biofilter) and up to the top of the hill, where it cascades down seven small waterfalls. You can turn this timer on for whatever time you want. It's not only entertaining, but it helps aerate the pond and the fish appreciate it. To turn on the pump, lift the latch on the metal assembly below and twist the timer knob to the right for however long a period you want the water to run. This system should NOT be operated during the off-season when the ground hydrant is off, since the circulation encourages evaporation and there are some leaks in the waterfalls. The pond level is lowest in March before the ground hydrant is turned back on.



When the pond level gets low, we have a hose from the spigot under the arbor very close to the above box that goes to the top or middle of the waterfalls. Eventually, we should extend a hose from here to the compost area.