Watering Guidelines for Summer Heat

Proper watering (irrigation) of grass is a surprisingly complicated science that can be frustratingly difficult to get right. As it gets hotter, your lawn will definitely need more water. But it also becomes increasingly easier to *overwater,* leading to disease problems. There are unfortunately no easy answers, but below are some guidelines to point you in the right general direction.

1) An average lawn will need about 1-2 inches of water per week. Every irrigation system is different, so that might mean 45 minutes every day for one lawn, or 20 minutes every other day for another. If you are on a weak well, it'll take much longer than if you are on high-pressure city water.
2) Your lawn is likely NOT average as very few are. Sandy lawns in full sun will need a lot more water than partially shaded lawns with richer, spongier topsoil. So we'll start with average, then you can make adjustments.
3) If you don't know how long it takes for your system to add 1-2 inches, you'll need to calibrate. See instructions below.

    A) Get some containers with straight, vertical sides (empty, clean tuna fish cans work well) and set several throughout your lawn prior to a watering cycle. Water for 30 minutes.

    B) With a simple ruler, measure how much water (in inches) was collected in each can, then take the average.

    C) Double that. This is the amount of water applied by your system per hour in inches.

    D) In the heat of the summer, you'll want to shoot for 2 inches. Now you can do the math. So if the average amount collected was .25 inches, then you double that to get 0.5 inches per hour. In order to get 2 inches of water, you'll need to water for 4 hours per week (since 0.5 X 4 = 2.0)

4) If your lawn continues to dry out, it may simply require more water than average and you'll need to increase the times on the irrigation clock.
5) Similarly, if the lawn is looking really lush and full, you ought to back off and water a little less so as not to encourage disease problems.
6) Keep tweaking and make notes so you'll know better for next year. With luck, you'll only need to go through the calibration procedure one time!

Some helpful video links:

"The Water Wedge" = https://bit.ly/2SmhabY

"Calibrating the System" = https://bit.ly/2LVFGzj

Or scan these codes with your smartphone.