



# Beautiful garden in Timaru Home & Gardens Tour flourishes with SMART watering

## SMART WATERING CASE STUDY: MICHAEL AND KARLYN HOPKINSON

Park Lane, the home and garden of Michael and Karlyn Hopkinson, has been described as having 'beautifully manicured grounds with large trees and mature rhododendrons framing sweeping lawns, making it easy to forget you are in the middle of town'.

A compliment to any gardener, but according to Michael, making sure that this beautiful garden retains its grandeur has taken time and care – with a particular focus on the watering system.

"We moved in a year ago," says Michael. "And following the brutally hot and dry summer last year, we knew we had to make sure our watering systems were up to scratch to maintain our garden."

"But by no means do we waste water," he said.

Michael explains that the watering system in his large section has been very carefully thought out with special care taken to avoid water wastage on footpaths or other unnecessary places.

Michael has fitted a sprinkler system which encompasses the whole garden. It runs off a pipe he installed which runs the circumference of the grounds. This means he can access water for all parts of the property, whenever needed. He has 12 garden taps diverting water of the pipe and has attached a simple timer to most of these. Michael uses the timers to ensure that water from the taps is only applied to specified spots in the garden with drip hoses and sprinklers in short bursts when needed.

"The timers only cost me \$9 a pop and are really good, all I need to do is turn them on and they work away for the set time. There are never any leaks or wastages. It's a sturdy little system."

Michael has customised his irrigation system so that some plants receive water by drip irrigation directly to where water is needed; he also uses mini-sprinklers for planted areas or large sprinklers for the expansive lawn.

"It is important to water your plants, but we only do about half an hour or so every day or every second day, depending on the weather. We take our water use very seriously. And part of this is being prepared, knowing when to water and making sure the water is getting to the right places.

"It's going to be a dry summer, similar to last year, but this year we are much more organised.

"We have made sure that the water covers the areas where it is needed. We have changed sprinkler heads to make sure it is directed to where it should be."

Michael's precise and carefully thought out irrigation plan for his garden should stand him in good stead for the dry period ahead.

*Michael and Karlyn Hopkinson are showing their garden as part of the Hospice Home & Gardens Tour.*



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