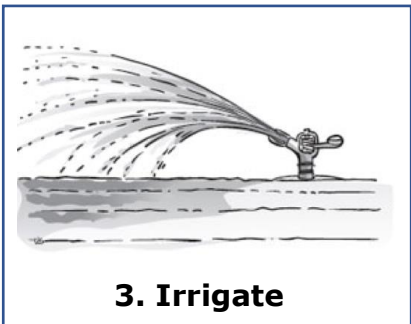




Soil Solarization for Healthy Soil in Four Easy Steps



What is soil solarization?

Soil solarization is a nonchemical method for controlling soil borne pests using high temperatures effected by capturing radiant energy from the sun.

Why do it?

- It kills many disease-causing organisms (pathogens), nematodes, and weed seeds and seedlings.
- It controls many important soil borne fungi.
- It increases beneficial soil organisms.

When to do it?

1. Solarization is most effective when done during the hottest weeks of the year.
2. Ideal time is June thru August in inland California.
3. Allow a 4 to 8-week timespan.

How to do it?

1. Remove all plant matter by tilling or preferably by pulling weeds.
2. Level and smooth soil.
3. Irrigate.
4. Lay clear or transparent plastic tarp.
 - a. Lay as flat and tight as possible.
 - b. 1 mil thickness is best for heat buildup.
 - c. 1.5 to 2 mil thickness is better for windy areas.
 - d. Keep on for 4 to 8 weeks
5. Remove plastic.
6. DO NOT till or re-dig the soil.

For more information:

<http://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn74145.html>



This handout and pictures are based on [UC ANR Publication 74145](#), *Soil Solarization for Gardens & Landscapes Management*.