

WATER CONSERVATION TIPS

Water Conservation – Indoors

1. Avoid having water run down the drain when there may be another use for it such as watering a plant or garden, or cleaning.
2. Verify that your home is leak-free, because many homes have hidden water leaks.
3. Repair dripping faucets by replacing washers. If your faucet is dripping at the rate of one drop per second, you can expect to waste 2,700 gallons per year which will add to the cost of water and sewer utilities, or strain your septic system.
4. Check for toilet tank leaks by adding food coloring to the tank. If the toilet is leaking, color will appear within 30 minutes. Check the toilet for worn out, corroded or bent parts. (Flush as soon as test is done, since food coloring may stain tank.)
5. Avoid flushing the toilet unnecessarily. Dispose of tissues, insects and other such waste in the trash rather than the toilet.
6. Take shorter showers. Replace your showerhead with an ultra-low-flow version.
7. Use the minimum amount of water needed for a bath by closing the drain first and filling the tub only 1/3 full. Stopper tub before turning water. The initial burst of cold water can be warmed by adding hot water later.
8. Brush your teeth first while waiting for water to get hot, then wash or shave after filling the basin.
9. Retrofit all wasteful household faucets by installing aerators with flow restrictors.
10. Operate automatic dishwashers and clothes washers only when they are fully loaded or properly set the water level for the size of load you are using.
11. When washing dishes by hand, fill one sink or basin with soapy water. Quickly rinse under a slow-moving stream from the faucet.
12. Store drinking water in the refrigerator rather than letting the tap run every time you want a cool glass of water.
13. Do not use running water to thaw meat or other frozen foods.
14. Kitchen sink disposals require lots of water to operate properly. Start a compost pile as an alternate method of disposing food waste instead of using a garbage disposal.
15. Consider installing an instant water heater on your kitchen sink so you don't have to let the water run while it heats up.
16. Insulate your water pipes. You'll get hot water faster plus avoid wasting water while it heats up.
17. If the toilet flush handle frequently sticks in the flush position, letting water run constantly, replace or adjust it.

Water Conservation – Outdoors

1. As a general rule, lawns only need watering every 5 to 7 days in the summer and every 10 to 14 days in the winter. A hearty rain eliminates the need for watering for as long as two weeks.
2. Water lawns during the early morning hours when temperatures and wind speed are the lowest.
3. Don't water your street, driveway or sidewalk. Position your sprinklers so that your water lands on the lawn and shrubs ... not the paved areas.
4. Install sprinklers that are the most water-efficient for each use. Micro and drip irrigation and soaker hoses are examples of water-efficient methods of irrigation.
5. Regularly check sprinkler systems and timing devices to be sure they are operating properly.
6. Raise the lawn mower blade to at least three inches. A lawn cut higher encourages grass roots to grow deeper, shades the root system and holds soil moisture better than a closely-clipped lawn.
7. Avoid over fertilizing your lawn. The application of fertilizers increases the need for water. Apply fertilizers which contain slow-release, water-insoluble forms of nitrogen.
8. Mulch to retain moisture in the soil. Mulching also helps to control weeds that compete with plants for water.
9. Plant native and/or drought-tolerant grasses, ground covers, shrubs and trees. Once established, they do not need to be watered as frequently and they usually will survive a dry period without any watering. Group plants together based on similar water needs.
10. Do not hose down your driveway or sidewalk. Use a broom to clean leaves and other debris from these areas. Using a hose to clean a driveway can waste hundreds of gallons of water.
11. Outfit your hose with a shut-off nozzle which can be adjusted down to fine spray so that water flows only as needed. When finished, "Turn it off" at the faucet instead of at the nozzle to avoid leaks.
12. Use hose washers between spigots and water hoses to eliminate leaks.
13. Do not leave sprinklers or hoses unattended. Your garden hoses can pour out 600 gallons or more in only a few hours, so don't leave the sprinkler running all day. Use a kitchen timer to remind yourself to turn it off.
14. Avoid the installation of ornamental water features (such as fountains) unless the water is recycled.