

## Did You Know?



### Water conservation facts. . .

*The average American uses 140-170 gallons of water per day.*

*An average of 8% of all home water use is wasted through leaks.*

*Fixing a leak can save 500 gallons of water each month.*

*If every household in America had a faucet that dripped once each second,*

*928 million gallons of water a day would leak away.*

*Turning off the water while you brush your teeth can save 4 gallons of water a minute,*

*that's 200 gallons a week for a family of four.*

*Taking showers instead of baths can save 30 gallons of water.*

*Filling a large bathtub uses 50 gallons of water.*

*Keeping your shower under 5 minutes can save up to 1,000 gallons a month.*

*In the average home, the toilet accounts for 27% of water use.*

*Washing a sidewalk or driveway with a hose uses about 50 gallons every 5 minutes.*



# WATER CONSERVATION AROUND THE HOUSE



A water shortage crisis—a close second to the global warming crisis. We take our water supply for granted especially in areas such as ours—the “Land of 10,000 Lakes”. We just assume that water will be here forever, but that’s not the case. We can’t take our water supply for granted. We need to put our energy and resources into finding solutions while we still can.

Groundwater is a precious resource. The best way to make our water supply last longer is to practice water conservation. Water conservation means using water wisely. Everyone can practice water conservation. The first step is to be aware of how precious water is. We also need to know how much we use. We cannot live without water. Remember every drop counts. If we each save a little, we all save a lot.



### Water conservation tips at home. . .



- Check faucets and pipes for leaks. A small drip from a worn faucet washer can waste 20 gallons of water per day.
- Don’t use the toilet as an ashtray or a wastebasket. Every time you flush a cigarette butt, facial tissue or other small bit of trash, five to seven gallons of water is wasted.
- Check your toilets for leaks. Put a little food coloring in your toilet tank. If without flushing, the color begins to appear in the bowl within 30 minutes, you have a leak that should be repaired immediately. Most replacement parts are inexpensive and easy to install.
- Put plastic bottles or a float booster in your toilet tank. To cut down on water waste, put an inch or

- two of sand pebbles inside each of two plastic bottles to weight them down. Fill the bottles with water, screw the lids on, and put them in your toilet tank, safely away from the operating mechanisms. This may save ten gallons or more of water per day. Be sure at least 3 gallons of water remain in the tank so it will flush properly.
- For new installations, consider buying “low flush” toilets, which use 1 to 2 gallons per flush instead of the usual 3 to 5 gallons. Replacing a 4.5 gallon per flush toilet with an ultra-low volume 1.5 gallon flush model represents a 70% savings in water flushed and will cut indoor water use by about 30%.
- Insulate your water pipes. It’s easy and inexpensive to insulate your water pipes with pre-slit foam pipe insulation. You will get hot water faster plus avoid wasting water while it heats up.

*“Water conservation comes naturally when everyone in the family is aware of its importance, and parents take the time to teach children some of the simple water-saving methods around the home which can make a big difference.”*

## Water conservation tips at home cont'd. . .



- Take shorter showers. One way to cut down on water use is to turn off the shower after soaping up, then turn it back on to rinse. A four-minute shower uses approximately 15 to 25 gallons of water.
- Install water-saving shower heads and low-flow faucet aerator.

Inexpensive water-saving low-flow shower heads or restrictors are easy for the homeowner to install. Also, long hot showers can use five to ten gallons every unneeded minute. Limit your showers to the time it takes to soap up, wash down and rinse off. “Low-flow” means it uses less than 2.5 gallons per minute.

- Use your water meter to check for hidden water leaks. Read the house water meter before and after a two-hour period when no water is being used. If the meter does not read exactly the same, there is a leak.
- Rinse your razor in the sink. Fill the sink with a few inches of warm water. This will rinse your razor just as well as running water, with far less waste of water.
- Turn off the water after you wet your toothbrush. There is no need to keep the water running while brushing your teeth. Just wet your brush and fill a glass for mouth rinsing.
- Minimize use of kitchen sink garbage disposal units. Start a compost pile as an alternate method of disposing food waste.
- Use your dishwasher and clothes washer for only full loads. Automatic dishwashers and clothes washers should be fully loaded for optimum water conservation.

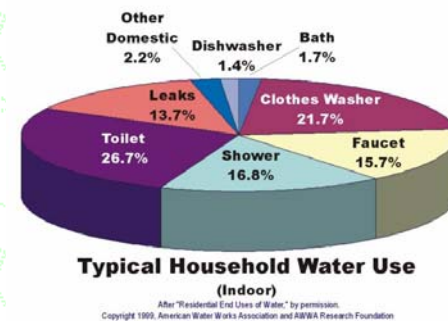


With clothes washers, avoid the permanent press cycle, which uses an added 5 gallons for the extra rinse. For partial loads, adjust water levels to match the size of the load.

- Replace old clothes washers. New Energy Star rated washers use 35—50% less water and 50% less energy per load. If you are in the market for a new clothes washer, consider buying a water-saving frontload washer.
- Don't let the faucet run while you clean vegetables. Just rinse them in a stoppered sink or a pan of clean water.
- Keep a bottle of drinking water in the fridge. Running tap water to cool it off for drinking water is wasteful. Store drinking water in the fridge in a safe drinking bottle.
- When washing dishes by hand, don't leave the water running for rinsing. If you have a double-basin, fill one with soapy water and one with rinse water. If you have a single basin sink, gather washed dishes in a dish rack and rinse them with a spray device or a pan full of hot water. If using a dishwasher, there is usually no need to pre-rinse the dishes.



## Be Water Smart Not Water Short



## Water conservation tips for yard & garden . . .

- Plant drought resistant lawns, shrubs and plants.



Many beautiful shrubs and plants thrive with far less watering than other species. Replace herbaceous perennial borders with native plants. Native plants will use less water and be more

- resistant to local plant diseases. Plant slopes with plants that will retain water and help reduce runoff. Group plants according to their watering needs.
- Put a layer of mulch around trees and shrubs. Mulch will slow evaporation of moisture while discouraging weed growth. Add 2-4 inches of organic material to retain moisture. Press the mulch down around the drip line of each plant to form a slight depression which will prevent or minimize water runoff.
- Don't water the gutter. Position your sprinklers so water lands on the lawn or garden, not on paved areas. Water your lawn only when it needs it. A good way to see if your lawn needs watering is to step on the grass. If it springs back up when you move, it doesn't need water. If it stays flat, the lawn is ready for watering. Letting the grass grow taller (to 3") will also promote water retention in the soil.
- Deep soak your lawn. When watering your lawn, do it long enough for the moisture to soak down to the roots where it will do the most good. A light sprinkling can evaporate quickly and tends to encourage shallow root systems. Put an empty tuna can on your lawn—when it's full, you've watered the right amount.
- Water during the early parts of the day; avoid watering when it's windy. Early morning is generally better than dusk since it helps prevent the growth of fungus.
- Early watering, late watering, also reduce water loss to evaporation. Watering early in the day is also the

best defense against slugs and other garden pests. Try not to water when it is windy—wind can blow sprinklers off target and speed evaporation.

- Add organic matter and use efficient watering systems for shrubs, flower beds and lawns. Adding organic material to your soil will help increase its absorption and water retention. You can greatly reduce the amount of water used for shrubs, beds and lawns by: the strategic placement of soaker hoses, installing a rain barrel water catchment system, or installing a simple drip-irrigation system. Avoid overwatering plants and shrubs, as this can actually diminish plant health and cause yellowing of leaves. When hand watering, use a spray nozzle for targeted watering.
- Don't run the hose while washing your car. Clean the car using a pail of soapy water. Use the hose only for rinsing—this simple practice can save as much as 150 gallons when washing the car. Use a spray nozzle when rinsing for more efficient use of water.
- Installing rain gutters and collecting water from downspouts also helps reduce water use.
- Use a broom, not a hose, to clean driveways and sidewalks.
- Check for leaks in pipes, hoses, faucets and couplings. Use hose washers as spigots and hose connections to eliminate leaks.
- Plant shade trees. Shade cast by trees or structures can cool the landscape by as much as 20 degrees, reducing heat buildup and water evaporation from the soil. Shade also reduces heat buildup from hard surfaces, such as driveways, walks and walls. Trellises, arbors, walls or fences also can provide shade or scatter light.

