

WATER CONSERVATION

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Public Works Department

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POSSIBLE WATER SAVINGS

Water-efficient toilets, high-efficiency washing machines, rain water harvesting systems, and water-wise landscaping can all help reduce water use. Water-efficient showerheads and aerators for faucets cost only a few dollars and can cut your water usage in half with no reduction in performance. Leaking faucets and toilets can waste thousands of gallons of water monthly, and they are inexpensive to fix. In the summer, outdoor water use can account for 50 percent or more of total water use. A few small changes in your water-use habits can make a huge difference in water savings.

Practicing the tips outlined in this brochure could save up to 25,000 gallons per year for a family of four. This can amount to hundreds of dollars a year in water and wastewater costs.

TIPS IN THE BATHROOM

- Replace your showerhead with a water-efficient model. This saves as much as 6 gallons of water per minute.
- Get in the shower right away after the water becomes hot enough.
- Take short showers and wash hands using only as much water flow as you really need.
- Take a shower instead of taking a bath. Showers with water-efficient showerheads often use less water than taking a bath.
- Recycle your old toilet and replace it with a water efficient toilet. This saves as much as 5 gallons per flush.
- Install a toilet displacement device. (Use a plastic bag or bottle filled with water to reduce the volume of water in the tank but still provide enough for flushing. Do not use bricks.)
- Pay attention to those dripping sounds and fix the leak(s).
- Don't forget about those sneaky silent leaks. Add a few drops of food coloring or a dye tablet to the water in the tank but do not flush the toilet. If the coloring appears in the bowl within a few minutes, the toilet has a leak that needs to be repaired.
- Never use the toilet to dispose of trash.
- Don't waste water when brushing your teeth. Shut off the water until it is time to rinse.
- Don't waste water while shaving. Fill the sink with hot water instead of letting the water run continuously.

TIPS IN THE KITCHEN

- Only run the dishwasher with a full load. If your dishes are not very dirty, use the short wash cycle.
- You can spend less money on water and energy by installing a high-efficiency dishwasher. High-efficiency dishwashers use about 6 to 10 gallons, or less, of water per load compared with 9 to 12 gallons per load for less efficient models.
- Don't leave the water running when you aren't using it.
- Install faucet aerators.
- Don't ignore leaky faucets; they waste lots of water.
- Dry scrape dishes instead of rinsing.

- Garbage disposals can waste water unnecessarily. Try to compost scrapings and left over food material.
- Soak pans rather than scrubbing them while the water is running.
- Rinse your vegetables in a pan of cold water; it doesn't take gallons of water to get the dirt off.
- Don't over-water your house plants.
- Collect rainwater or recycle water from fish tanks to water your plants.

TIPS FOR DOING LAUNDRY

- Wash only full loads.
- Buy a high-efficiency washer. They use at least 40 percent less water and energy as conventional washers.
- If you must wash partial loads, match the load setting on the washing machine with the amount of laundry to be washed.
- If your clothes are not heavily soiled, use the short wash cycle.

OUTDOOR TIPS

- Don't over-water your lawn.
- Don't abuse the benefits of an automatic sprinkler system by over-watering.
- Check sprinklerheads regularly to make sure they are working properly.
- Install rain-shutoff devices and adjust sprinklers to eliminate coverage on pavement.
- Prevent evaporation of water. Water lawns early in the morning or in the evening during the hotter summer months.
- Never water on windy days.
- Use drip irrigation systems for bedded plants, trees or shrubs and use low angle sprinklers for lawns.
- Plant water-wise, well-adapted and/or native shrubs, trees and grass.
- Harvest the rain. Buy a rain barrel or a cistern and collect the water from your gutters to water your plants.
- Don't waste water by cleaning patios or sidewalks with it, use a broom.
- Taller grass holds moisture better. Keep grass 3 inches tall during the summer.
- If you are washing your car at home, wash it on the lawn, use a bucket of soapy water and use a hose nozzle that shuts off the water while you scrub.

ADDITIONAL TIPS

Be a water leak sleuth. Don't ignore leaking faucets; they are usually easy and inexpensive to repair. Find other uses for water rather than letting it go down the drain, such as watering houseplants with fish tank water.