



Why Save Water?

Only 1% of the water on our planet is safe, drinkable water. As our population grows, more and more people are using up this limited resource which means that we need to conserve as much as possible by getting into good water-using habits every day. Water conservation means doing as much as we can to not waste water when we use it. We can all help reduce waste by making small behavioral changes and by choosing more water efficient products. Check out our overview of water saving tips and advice:

At Home

Check for Leaks:

- Faucets and water-using appliances that leak are the biggest water wasters in the home. Most faucet leaks are caused by worn-out washers, parts that are inexpensive to repair. In the majority of cases, the worn-out washers are easily replaced.
- To check for toilet leaks, put about a dozen drops of red food coloring (be sure not to use any type of dye) into the toilet tank. Wait 10 to 15 minutes. If no coloring shows up in the bowl, you have a leak-free toilet. But color in the bowl means you need to check the flushing mechanism.

In the Bathroom

1. Toilets

When you must install a new fixture, investigate new toilet systems. Some use only a few quarts of water. Some, such as composting toilets, may use no water. Still other systems use "grey water" (water from the bathtub or washing machine) instead of using clean drinking water to flush.

- Create a displacement device inside the tank. Cut the top off a plastic gallon jug. Put some clean, heavy stones in the bottom part of the jug and place it in the tank where it won't get in the way of the moving parts of the toilet. If you use a smaller plastic bottle, you may not need to cut the top off. Just fill the bottle with some water and stones and place it in the tank. Every time the toilet is flushed, you save the amount of water that remains in the jug or bottle.
- If it's agreeable to family members, consider flushing less often - after two or three uses, or when there is solid waste. Liquid waste generally is not a health hazard.
- Never use the toilet as an ash tray or "waste basket" by flushing gum wrappers, paper towels, or other items.

2. Showers

- Take shorter showers to save more water.
- Wet down; turn off the water; soap up; turn the water back on, and rinse off. Especially consider turning off the water while shampooing your hair.

- Install flow-control inserts. These are inexpensive and usually fairly simple to install. They may cut the



flow to as little as 2.75 gallons a minute. However, in areas that have low water pressure, the results may not be as good.



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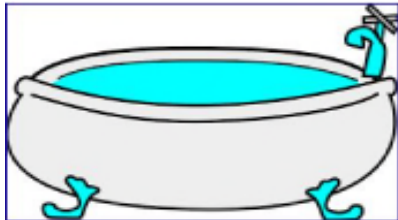
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Showers Continued:

- Install a low-flow shower head. Check the a minute if you want substantial savings. These shower heads often mix air with water to provide the pressure needed for satisfactory showering.
- As you run the hot water until it heats up enough for a shower, collect the water in a bucket for watering plants.

3. Bathtubs

- Don't spill water through the overflow pipe.
- Bathe with less water.



- Make sure the stopper is water tight.
- Put the stopper in the tub before you turn on the water. As water heats up, it will mix with the colder water and warm it.
- Bathe small children together.
- Switch to showering.

4. Bathroom Sink

- When brushing your teeth, fill a glass half way and use that water to wet your brush and rinse your mouth; don't let the water run.
- When shaving or washing hands, fill the basin and dip the razor or hands as needed.
- Install a water-saving tap device: *Flow restrictors* - restrict the amount of water that flows; *Spray taps* - spray the water like a miniature shower and make washing and rinsing operations handier and more efficient.

- *Aerators* - mix air with water to reduce the flow; *Combined spray tap-aerators* - combine both features.



In the Kitchen

1. Food Preparation

- Fill the sink or a container for washing, rinsing, or peeling vegetables. Don't let the water run. Use the "greywater" for watering plants.
- Cook food in as little water as possible to prevent wasting water and losing nutrients.
- Follow recipes carefully and do not overcook or measure out more water than necessary.
- Select the proper size pans for cooking. Large pans require more cooking water.
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- Use tight-fitting lids on pans to keep water from boiling away too fast.





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Food Preparation Continued:

- Save the water left after you cook vegetables to use for soups or cooking other raw vegetables. Refrigerate the leftover water and use within a few days.
- Thaw frozen food in the refrigerator rather than under running water.
- For drinking water, don't let the water run until it gets cold enough to drink. Instead, keep a bottle of drinking water in the refrigerator.

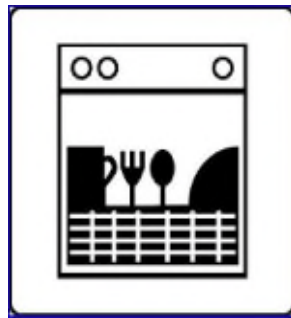
2. Washing Dishes by Hand:

- Fill the sink or a dishpan. Fill a second basin or dishpan with rinse water. Don't let the water run continuously. Washing dishes by hand and letting water run can use from 8 to 20 gallons.
- Use "greywater" from washing and rinsing around, but not directly on, outdoor plants, or use it for other cleaning jobs.



3. Dishwasher:

Rinse dishes in a stoppered sink or dishpan and skip the presoak cycle. If you like the pre-soak cycle, don't waste water by rinsing in the sink first. Better yet, scrape the dishes and let the dishwasher do the rest.



- If you have a sink garbage disposal unit, use it sparingly. Accumulate the waste and dispose of it all at once by flushing with cold water. Better yet, save scraps for composting (don't compost meat or dairy products).

In the Laundry:

- Use water-saver settings if available on the machine.

- That is, set the water level for the size of the wash load.

- Wash only with full loads.

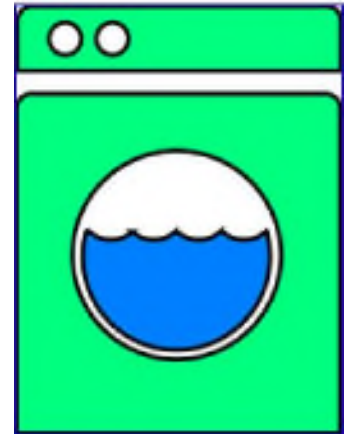
- Wash only when clothes are dirty, not just to remove wrinkles.

- Use low-foam detergents. They require less water for rinsing and have no effect on cleaning power.

- Hand wash several items at the same time. Use the final rinse water from one group of items as the wash water for the next group.

- Before using a permanent press cycle, read the manufacturer's directions. This cycle may fill the tub an extra time, possibly using up to 20 extra gallons. If so, use a different cycle.

- Turn off the water supply to the washer when it is not in use to guard against possible leaks. Check the hoses and look for leaks periodically.





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Household Cleaning

- Clean up spills and remove spots as quickly as possible to avoid having to mop floors or shampoo carpets too often.
- Vacuum rugs regularly to prevent the need for frequent shampooing.
- Plan household cleaning chores so that water can be reused for certain activities. For instance, clean lightly soiled surfaces first, then the dirtier area, using the same cleaning water. Doing several tasks at the same time can save water.



- Take advantage of a soft summer rain to wash your car. Use some soap and a sponge and let nature be a helping hand.
- For a swimming pool, spa, or Jacuzzi, clean the filter and maintain properly to avoid having to replace water often.
- When the water must be replaced, be aware that some pool water may be used to water lawns and plants.
- If the swimming pool, spa, or Jacuzzi is outdoors, cover it when not in use to prevent evaporation.
- Keep levels on swimming pools low enough to prevent splashing water out.

Lawns and Gardens:

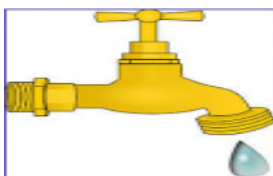
- Choose plants that are native to the particular region where they will be planted so that they will be adaptable to the amount of available water.
- Plan lawn, landscape, and garden to minimize water needs.
- Group plants that need similar amounts of water.
- Mulch plants and small trees to retain moisture in the soil for a longer time.



Outside the House

Outdoor Tasks

- Use a broom rather than a hose and water for the driveway, patio, sidewalks, and garage floor.
- If you wash your car, consider using a mild detergent and parking the car on the grass so the water used will also water the grass. Use a bucket of water to wash the car, then rinse quickly with the hose.





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Lawns and Gardens continued:

- Mulch plants and small trees to retain moisture in the soil for a longer time.
- Pull weeds to eliminate competition for water.
- When watering lawns and plants, remember the general rule: water slowly, deeply, and infrequently.
- Most lawns do not need frequent watering. Water when: a soil sample from the root zone feels dry, many leaf blades are folded in half, there are signs of wilting, or footprints remain in the grass long after being made.
- Water during the early morning or evening hours when temperature and wind are lowest.
- Don't water on windy days.
- Use a soaker hose or trickle or drip irrigation system or device to put water closer to the roots instead of spraying it into the air where it can be lost to evaporation.
- If you use a sprinkler, choose one that sprays low and with large drops. Position it so that it waters the lawn, not the driveway or sidewalk.
- Raise the lawn mower blade. Check with a lawn and garden center to find out the best height for your particular grass.
- Cuffing the lawn higher encourages grass roots to grow deeper, shades the root system, and holds soil moisture better than does a closely clipped lawn.
- Mow the lawn often, and don't rake the clippings. Frequent mowing will produce fewer, less dense clippings that will provide shade and mulch for roots, thus requiring less water.
- Avoid over-fertilizing the lawn. Apply fertilizers that contain slow release, water insoluble forms of nitrogen.