

Saving Water Starts with You!!!

Listed below are several suggested ways to save water and money...

In General:

- Check your water meter and bill to track your water usage.
- Make sure you know where your master water shut-off valve is located. This could save gallons of water and damage to your home if a pipe were to burst.
- Listen for dripping faucets and toilets that flush themselves. Fixing a leak can save significant amounts of water.
- Grab a wrench and fix that leaky faucet. It's simple and inexpensive.
- We're more likely to notice leaky faucets indoors, but don't forget to check outdoor faucets, pipes, and hoses for leaks.
- Make sure there are low-flow aerators on all of your faucets.
- Teach your children to turn the faucets off tightly after each use.
- Insulate hot water pipes so you don't have to run as much water to get hot water to the faucet.
- When you shop for a new appliance, consider one offering cycle and load size adjustments. They are more water and energy-efficient than older appliances.
- Choose new water-saving appliances, like washing machines that save up to 20 gallons per load.
- Do one thing each day that will save water. Even if savings are small, every drop counts.
- If you accidentally drop ice cubes when filling your glass from the freezer, don't throw them in the sink. Drop them in a house plant instead.
- When you have ice left in your cup from a take-out restaurant, don't throw it in the trash, dump it on a plant.
- Bathe your pets outdoors in an area in need of water.
- When you give your pet fresh water, don't throw the old water down the drain. Use it to water your trees or shrubs.
- When you clean your fish tank, use the water you've drained on your plants. The water is rich in nitrogen and phosphorus, providing you with a free and effective fertilizer.
- Encourage your school system and local government to help develop and promote a water conservation ethic among children and adults.
- Pick-up the phone and report significant water losses from broken pipes, open hydrants and errant sprinklers to the property owner or your water department.
- Use a commercial car wash that recycles water.

Save Water In the Laundry Room:

- When doing laundry, match the water level to the size of the load.
- Wash clothes only when you have a full load.

Save Water In the Kitchen:

- When washing dishes by hand, don't let the water run while rinsing. Fill one sink with wash water and the other with rinse water.
- Use the garbage disposal sparingly. Compost instead and save gallons every time. Throw trimmings and peelings from fruits and vegetables into your yard compost to prevent from using the garbage disposal.
- Keep a pitcher of water in the refrigerator instead of running the tap for cold drinks, so that every drop goes down you not the drain.
- Wash your produce in the sink or a pan that is partially filled with water instead of running water from the tap.
- Collect the water you use for rinsing produce and reuse it to water houseplants.
- Designate one glass for your drinking water each day. This will cut down on the number of times you run your dishwasher.
- Don't use running water to thaw food.
- Soak your pots and pans instead of letting the water run while you scrape them clean.
- Install an instant water heater on your kitchen sink so you don't have to let the water run while it heats up. This will also reduce heating costs for your household.
- Cut back on rinsing if your dishwasher is new. Newer models clean more thoroughly than older ones.
- Run your dishwasher only when it is full
- Select the proper size pans for cooking. Large pans require more cooking water than may be necessary.
- Cook food in as little water as possible. This will also retain more of the nutrients.

Save Water In the Bathroom:

- Turn the water off while you brush your teeth, shampoo and condition your hair or while you shave.
- When you are washing your hands, don't let the water run while you lather.
- To save water and time, consider washing your face or brushing your teeth while in the shower.
- Time your shower to keep it under 5 minutes.
- If your shower can fill a one-gallon bucket in less than 20 seconds, then replace it with a water-efficient showerhead.
- Install low-volume toilets.
- Put food coloring in your toilet tank. If it seeps into the toilet bowl, you have a leak. Toilet flappers should be replaced with the proper model-specific flapper.
- Before you lather up, install a low-flow showerhead. They're inexpensive and easy to install.
- Make sure your toilet flapper doesn't stick open after flushing.
- Bathe your young children together.
- Drop that tissue in the trash instead of flushing it and save gallons every time.
- If your toilet was installed prior to 1994, replace it with a new low-flush volume toilet of 1.6 gallons or less per flush.
- Keep a bucket in the shower to catch water as it warms up or runs. Use this water to flush toilets or water plants.

Save Water In the Pool/Water Feature:

- When back-washing your pool, consider using the water on your landscaping.
- Install covers on pools and spas and check for leaks around your pumps.
- Use a grease pencil to mark the water level of your pool at the skimmer. Check the mark 24 hours later. Your pool should lose no more than 1/4 inch each day.
- Periodically check your pool for leaks if you have an automatic refilling device.
- Make sure your swimming pools, fountains, and ponds are equipped with recirculating pumps.

Save Water In the Yard:

- Minimize evaporation by watering during the early morning hours, when temperatures are cooler and winds are lighter.
- Divide your watering cycle into shorter periods to reduce runoff and allow for better absorption.
- Check your sprinkler system frequently and adjust sprinklers so only your lawn is watered and not the house, sidewalk, or street.
- Only water your lawn when needed. You can tell this by simply walking across your lawn. If you leave footprints, it's time to water
- Use the sprinkler for larger areas of grass. Water small patches by hand to avoid waste.
- Use porous materials for walkways and patios to keep water in your yard and prevent wasteful runoff.
- Direct down-spouts and other runoff towards shrubs and trees, or collect and use for your garden.
- Install a rain shut-off device on your automatic sprinklers to eliminate unnecessary watering.
- Choose a water-efficient drip irrigation system for trees, shrubs and flowers. Watering at the roots is very effective, be careful not to over water.
- Remember to check your sprinkler system valves periodically for leaks and keep the heads in good shape.
- Don't water your lawn on windy days. After all, sidewalks and driveways don't need water.
- Water your plants deeply but less frequently to create healthier and stronger landscapes.
- Set a kitchen timer when watering your lawn or garden with a hose.
- Use a screwdriver as a soil probe to test soil moisture. If it goes in easily, don't water. Proper lawn watering can save thousands of gallons of water annually.
- Place an empty tuna can on your lawn to catch and measure the water output of your sprinklers. For lawn watering advice, contact your local extension office.
- Bermuda grasses are dormant (brown) in the winter and will only require water once every three to four weeks or less if it rains.
- Use sprinklers that throw big drops of water close to the ground. Smaller drops of water and mist often evaporate before they hit the ground.
- More plants die from over-watering than from under-watering. Be sure only to water plants when necessary.
- Adjust your watering schedule to the season.
- Buy a rain gauge to track how much rain or irrigation your yard receives. Check with your local extension office to see how much rain is needed to skip an irrigation cycle.

Save Water In the Yard (Continued):

- Avoid planting turf in areas that are hard to water such as steep inclines and isolated strips along sidewalks and driveways.
- Plant during the spring or fall when the watering requirements are lower.
- Use a layer of organic mulch around plants to reduce evaporation and save hundreds of gallons of water a year.
- Group plants with the same watering needs together to get the most out of your watering
- Remember to weed your lawn and garden regularly. Weeds compete with other plants for
- While fertilizers promote plant growth, they also increase water consumption. Apply the minimum amount of fertilizer needed.
- Next time you add or replace a flower or shrub, choose a low water use plant for year-round landscape color.
- Landscape with Xeriscape trees, plants and groundcovers. Call your local extension office for more information about these water thrifty plants.
- Adjust your lawn mower to a higher setting. Longer grass shades root systems and holds soil moisture better than a closely clipped lawn.
- Avoid over-seeding your lawn with winter grass. Once established, ryegrass needs water.
- When the kids want to cool off, use the sprinkler in an area where your lawn needs it the most.
- Aerate your lawn. Punch holes in your lawn about six inches apart so water will reach the roots rather than run off the surface.
- Avoid installing ornamental water features and fountains that lose water to evaporation.
- For hanging baskets, planters and pots, place ice cubes under the moss or dirt to give your plants a cool drink of water and help eliminate water overflow.
- Start a compost pile. Using compost when you plant adds water-holding organic matter to the soil.
- Use a broom instead of a hose to clean your driveway or sidewalk and save 80 gallons of water every time.
- Wash your car on the grass. This will water your lawn at the same time.
- Use an automatic shut-off hose nozzle while you wash your car.