

Water Conservation Tips for Residents

Begin at: <https://www.epa.gov/watersense> and https://www3.epa.gov/region1/eco/drinkwater/water_conservation_residents.html

For Every Room in the House With Plumbing

- Repair leaky faucets, indoors and out.
- Consider replacing old equipment (like toilets, dishwashers and laundry machines).

In the Kitchen

- When cooking, peel and clean vegetables in a large bowl of water instead of under running water. (Compost the scraps!)
- Fill your sink or a large bowl for washing and rinsing dishes.
- Only run the dishwasher when it's full.
- When buying a dishwasher, select one with a "light-wash" option. (WATER SENSE)
- Only use the garbage disposal when necessary (composting is a great alternative).
- Install faucet aerators.

In the Bathroom

- Take short showers instead of baths.
- Turn off the water to brush teeth, shave and soap up in the shower. Fill the sink or a small bowl to shave. Consider hanging a timer in the shower, and set a limit for yourself, like 5 minutes of running water.
- Repair leaky toilets. Add 12 drops of food coloring into the tank, and if color appears in the bowl one hour later, your toilet is leaking. Consider conserving flushes.
- Install a toilet dam, faucet aerators and low-flow showerheads.

Laundry

- Run full loads of laundry.
- When purchasing a new washing machine, buy a water saving model that can be adjusted to the load size.

Outdoors

- Maximize the use of natural vegetation and establish smaller lawns. For portions of your lot where a lawn and landscaping are desired, ask your local nursery for tips about plants and grasses with low water demand (such as creeping fescue). Consider planting more trees, shrubs, ground covers, and less grass. Shrubs and ground covers provide greenery for much of the year and usually demand less water. Use native plants in flower beds. Native plants have adapted to local rainfall conditions and often provide critical wildlife habitat. Cluster plants that require extra care together to minimize time and save water.
- When mowing your lawn, set the mower blades to 2-3 inches high. Longer grass shades the soil improving moisture retention, has more leaf surface to take in sunlight, allowing it to grow thicker and develop a deeper root system. This helps grass survive drought, tolerate insect damage and fend off disease.
- Only water the lawn when necessary. If you water your lawn and garden, only do it once a week, if rainfall isn't sufficient. Avoid watering on windy and hot days. Water the lawn and garden in the morning or late in the evening to maximize the amount of water which reaches

October 20, 2022

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the plant roots (otherwise most of the water will evaporate). Use soaker hoses to water gardens and flower beds. If sprinklers are used, take care to be sure they don't water walkways and buildings. When you water, put down no more than 1 inch (set out a empty cans to determine how long it takes to water 1 inch) each week. This watering pattern will encourage more healthy, deep grass roots. Over-watering is wasteful, encourages fungal growth and disease, and results in the growth of shallow, compacted root systems that are more susceptible to drought and foot traffic. If an automatic lawn irrigation system is used, be sure it has been properly installed, is programmed to deliver the appropriate amount and rate of water, and has rain shut-off capability.

- Apply mulch around shrubs and flower beds to reduce evaporation, promote plant growth and control weeds. (Keep mulch 3 or so inches from plant stems, though)
- Add compost or an organic matter to soil as possible, to improve soil conditions and water retention. Stop or dramatically reduce artificial chemical fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides.
- Collect rainfall for irrigation in a screened container (to prevent mosquito larvae growth).
- Install rain barrels or rain gardens.
- Reduce impermeable pavement.
- When washing a car, wet it quickly, then use a bucket of water to wash the car. Turn on the hose to final rinse (or let mother nature wash your car when it rains).
- Always use a broom to clean walkways, driveways, decks and porches, rather than hosing off these areas.

In General

- Reduce unnecessary purchases to reduce water (and energy) required to resource, manufacture, transport and dispose of consumer goods. Especially reduce plastic and single-use item purchases.
- Purchase second hand, rent or borrow when possible.
- Reduce chemicals used for cleaning. Try baking soda, salt and vinegar alternatives.
- Reduce harmful chemicals in general purchases. Check <https://www.ewg.org/ewgverified/index.php>

CHECK OUT THESE VIDEOS ABOUT STORM WATER RUN OFF and using NATIVE plants:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6xmH2xxvyJ0> (4 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3wzcz8dWyBc> (1 hour, 8 minutes)

CONSIDER WATCHING the documentary, "A Plastic Ocean" <https://aplasticocean.movie/> to see how local purchases and waste affect water systems worldwide

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