



Water Conservation & Saving Tips



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. Most lawns only need about 1" of water each week. During dry spells, you can stop watering altogether and the lawn will go brown and dormant. Once cooler weather arrives, the morning dew and rainfall will bring the lawn back to its usual vigor. This may result in a summer lawn, brown but it saves a lot of water.



Deep-soak your lawn

When watering the 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 about 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, and 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's windy - wind can blow sprinklers off target and speed evaporation.

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 a car. Use a spray nozzle when rinsing for more

Use a broom, not a water hose, to clean driveways and sidewalks.

Check for leaks in pipes, hoses, faucets and couplings

Leaks outside the house may not seem as bad since they're not as visible. But they can be just as wasteful as leaks indoors. Check frequently to keep them drip-free. Use hose washers at spigots and hose connections to eliminate leaks.

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.



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Ways to Save Water and Reduce Costs of Billing:

Check faucets and pipes for leaks

A small drip from a worn faucet washer can waste 20 gallons of water per day. Larger leaks can waste hundreds of gallons.

Don't use the toilet as an ashtray or 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

Place a small amount of 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 needs repairing. (Note: this will not work if you have deodorizing colors in the tank now)

Replace the flappers in the tanks once a year.

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.



Put plastic bottles or brick in your toilet tank

To reduce water waste, put an inch or two of sand or pebbles inside each of two plastic bottles to weigh them down. Fill the bottles with water, screw the lids on, and put them in your toilet tank, safely away from the operating mechanisms. You can also place one brick into the tank – safely away from mechanisms – to reduce to water waste.

Be sure at least 3 gallons of water remain in the tank so it will flush properly. If there is not enough water to get a proper flush, users will hold the lever down too long or do multiple flushes to get rid of waste. Two flushing's at 1.4 gallons is worse than a single 2.0 gallon flush. A better suggestion would be to buy an adjustable flapper to allow for adjustment of their per flush use. Then the user can adjust the flush rate to the minimum per flush setting that achieves a single good flush each time.

For new installations, consider buying "low flush" toilets, which use 1 to 2 gallons per flush instead of the usual 3 to 5 gallons.

Minimize use of kitchen sink garbage disposal units

In-sink disposals require lots of water to operate properly, and also add considerably to the volume of solids in a septic tank which can lead to maintenance problems. Start a compost pile as an alternate method of disposing food waste.

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 painful of hot water.

Take shorter showers—One way to cut down on water use is to turn off the shower after soaping up, and then turn it back on to rinse. A four-minute shower uses approximately 20 to 40 gallons of water. 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.



Install water-saving shower heads

Inexpensive low-flow shower heads or restrictors are easy for the homeowner to install. "Low-flow" means it uses less than 2.5 gallons per minute. This single best home water conservation method is also the cheapest!

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.

Rinse your razor in the sink—Fill the sink with a few inches of warm water. You can rinse your razor just as well as running water, with far less waste of water.

Use your dishwasher and clothes washer for only full loads—Automatic dishwashers and clothes washers should be fully loaded for water conservation.

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.