

CONSERVATION TIPS

INDOOR

KITCHEN

- There are a number of ways to save water, and they all start with you.
- When washing dishes by hand, don't let the water run. Fill a basin for rinse water.
- Dishwashers typically use less water than washing dishes by hand. Now, Energy Star dishwashers save even more water and energy.
- If your dishwasher is new, cut back on rinsing. Newer models clean more thoroughly than older ones.
- Designate one glass for your drinking water each day, or refill a water bottle.
- Soak pots and pans instead of letting the water run while you scrape them clean.
- Instead of using the garbage disposal, compost vegetable food waste and save gallons every time.
- Wash your fruits and vegetables in a pan of water instead of running water from the tap. Then use that water for house plants.
- For water efficiency and food safety, defrost food in the refrigerator, not under running water.
- Install an instant water heater near your kitchen sink so you don't have to run the water while it heats up. This also reduces energy costs.
- Keep a pitcher of drinking water in the refrigerator instead of running the tap. This way, every drop goes down you and not the drain.
- Reuse leftover water from cooked or steamed foods to start a nutritious soup.
- Cook food in as little water as possible. This also helps it retain more nutrients.
- Select the proper pan size for cooking. Large pans may require more cooking water than necessary.
- If you accidentally drop ice cubes, don't throw them in the sink. Drop them in a house plant instead.
- When shopping for a new dishwasher, use the Consortium for Energy Efficiency website to compare water use between models.

LAUNDRY ROOM

- When doing laundry, match the water level to the size of the load.
- Washing dark clothes in cold water saves water and energy, and helps your clothes retain their color.
- When shopping for a new washing machine, compare resource savings among Energy Star models. Some can save up to 20 gallons of water per load.

CONSERVATION TIPS

BATHROOM

- If your shower fills a one-gallon bucket in less than 20 seconds, replace the showerhead with a WaterSense® labeled model.
- Shorten your shower by a minute or two and you'll save up to 150 gallons per month.
- Time your shower to keep it under 5 minutes. You'll save up to 1,000 gallons per month.
- Toilet leaks can be silent! Be sure to test your toilet for leaks at least once a year.
- When running a bath, plug the bathtub before turning on the water. Adjust the temperature as the tub fills.
- Upgrade older toilets with water-saving WaterSense® labeled models.
- If your toilet flapper doesn't close properly after flushing, replace it.
- Turn off the water while you brush your teeth and save up to 4 gallons a minute.
- If your toilet was installed before 1992, purchasing a WaterSense® labeled toilet can reduce the amount of water used for each flush.
- Consider buying a dual-flush toilet. It has two flush options: a half-flush for liquid waste and a full-flush for solid waste.
- Plug the sink instead of running the water to rinse your razor and save up to 300 gallons a month.
- Turn off the water while washing your hair and save up to 150 gallons a month.
- When washing your hands, turn the water off while you lather.
- Take 5-minute showers instead of baths. A full bathtub requires up to 70 gallons of water.
- Install water-saving aerators on all of your faucets.
- Drop tissues in the trash instead of flushing them and save water every time.
- Look for WaterSense® labeled toilets, sink faucets, urinals and showerheads.
- One drip every second adds up to five gallons per day! Check your faucets and showerheads for leaks.
- While you wait for hot water, collect the running water and use it to water plants.

CONSERVATION TIPS

GENERAL INDOOR

- Teach children to turn off faucets tightly after each use and reward kids for the water-saving tips they follow.
- When the kids want to cool off, use the sprinkler in an area where your lawn needs it most.
- Encourage your school system and local government to develop and promote water conservation among children and adults. Make suggestions to your employer or school about ways to save water and money
- Play fun games while learning how to save water!
- Monitor your water bill for unusually high use. Your bill and water meter are tools that can help you discover leaks. Learn how to use your water meter to check for leaks.
- Avoid recreational water toys that require a constant flow of water.
- Grab a wrench and fix that leaky faucet. It's simple, inexpensive, and you can save 140 gallons a week.
- Be a leak detective! Check all hoses, connectors, and faucets regularly for leaks.
- We're more likely to notice leaky faucets indoors, but don't forget to check outdoor faucets, pipes, and hoses.
- See a leak you can't fix? Tell a parent, teacher, employer, or property manager, or call a handyman.
- At home or while staying in a hotel, reuse your towels.
- Run your washer and dishwasher only when they are full. You can save up to 1,000 gallons a month.
- See how your water use stacks up to others by calculating your daily water use.

CONSERVATION TIPS OUTDOOR

XERISCAPE LANDSCAPING

- Use porous material for walkways and patios to prevent wasteful runoff and keep water in your yard.
- Group plants with the same watering needs together to avoid overwatering some while underwatering others.
- Reduce the amount of lawn in your yard by planting shrubs and ground covers appropriate to your site and region. Plant species native to your region.
- Plant in the spring and fall, when the watering requirements are lower.
- When sprucing up your front or backyard, consider xeriscaping. This landscape method uses low-water-use plants to limit your water use.
- Consider attending a landscape class hosted by a water provider. Most workshops occur in the spring and fall.
- Avoid planting grass in areas that are hard to water, such as steep inclines and isolated strips along sidewalks and driveways.
- Leave lower branches on trees and shrubs and allow leaf litter to accumulate on the soil. This keeps the soil cooler and reduces evaporation.
- Start a compost pile. Using compost in your garden or flower beds adds water-holding organic matter to the soil.
- Use a layer of organic mulch on the surface of your planting beds to minimize weed growth that competes for water.
- Spreading a layer of organic mulch around plants helps them retain moisture, saving water, time and money.
- Use 2 to 4 inches of organic mulch around plants to reduce evaporation and save hundreds of gallons of water a year.
- Visit your local xeriscape garden to view plants that thrive in our hot desert environment.
- Next time you add or replace a flower or shrub, choose a low-water-use plant and save up to 550 gallons each year.
- Call your local conservation office for more information about xeriscaping with water-thrifty trees, plants, and ground covers.
- Collect water from your roof by installing gutters and downspouts. Direct the runoff to plants and trees.
- For automatic water savings, direct water from rain gutters and HVAC systems to water-loving plants in your landscape.

CONSERVATION TIPS

LAWN CARE

- Hire a qualified pro to install your irrigation system and keep it working properly and efficiently.
- Adjust your lawn mower to the height of 1.5 to 2 inches. Taller grass shades roots and holds soil moisture better than short grass.
- Leave lawn clippings on your grass, this cools the ground and holds in moisture.
- If installing a lawn, select a lawn mix or blend that matches your climate and site conditions.
- Aerate your lawn periodically. Holes every six inches will allow water to reach the roots, rather than run off the surface.
- If walking across the lawn leaves footprints (blades don't spring back up), then it is time to water.
- Remember to weed your lawn and garden regularly. Weeds compete with other plants for nutrients, light and water.
- While fertilizers promote plant growth, they also increase water consumption. Apply the minimum amount of fertilizer needed.
- Catch water in an empty tuna can to measure sprinkler output. 3/4 to 1 inch of water is enough to apply each time you irrigate.

POOL

- Use a pool cover to help keep your pool clean, reduce chemical use and prevent water loss through evaporation.
- Make sure your swimming pools, fountains and ponds are equipped with recirculating pumps.
- If you have an automatic refilling device, check your pool periodically for leaks.
- When back-washing your pool, consider using the water on salt-tolerant plants in the landscape.
- Minimize or eliminate the use of waterfalls and sprays in your pool. Aeration increases evaporation.
- Don't overfill the pool. Lower water levels will reduce water loss due to splashing.
- Keep water in the pool when playing, it will save water.
- Instead of building a private pool, join a community pool.
- Trickling or cascading fountains lose less water to evaporation than those that spray water into the air.
- Use a grease pencil to conduct a bucket test to check for pool leaks. An unnatural water level drop may indicate a leak.

CONSERVATION TIPS

LANDSCAPE

- Use a trowel, shovel, or soil probe to examine soil moisture depth. If the top two to three inches of soil are dry, it's time to water.
- Set a kitchen timer when using the hose as a reminder to turn it off. A running hose can discharge up to 10 gallons per minute.
- Check your sprinkler system frequently and adjust sprinklers so only your lawn is watered and not the house, sidewalk or street.
- Minimize evaporation by watering during the early morning hours when temperatures are cooler and winds are lighter.
- Timing is everything when it comes to irrigation. Learn how to set your controller properly.
- Look for WaterSense® labeled irrigation controllers.
- Learn how to shut off your automatic watering system in case of malfunctions or rain.
- Apply water only as fast as the soil can absorb it.
- If water runs off your lawn easily, split your watering time into shorter periods to allow for better absorption.
- Water only when necessary. More plants die from over-watering than from under-watering.
- Signs of overwatering: Leaves turn lighter shades of green or yellow, young shoots wilt, and sometimes algae or fungi grow.
- Adjust your watering schedule each month to match seasonal weather conditions and landscape requirements.
- Install a rain sensor on your irrigation controller so your system won't run when it's raining.
- Water dry spot by hand instead of running the whole irrigation system longer.
- Don't water your lawn on windy days when most of the water blows away or evaporates.
- Use drip irrigation for shrubs and trees to apply water directly to the roots, where it's needed.
- Water your plants deeply but less frequently to encourage deep root growth and drought tolerance.
- Use sprinklers that deliver big drops of water close to the ground. Smaller drops and mist often evaporate before hitting the ground.
- Use a rain barrel to harvest rainwater from gutters for watering gardens and landscapes.
- For hanging baskets, planters and pots, put ice cubes on top of the soil to give your plants a cool drink of water without overflow.
- Remember to periodically check your sprinkler system valves for leaks, and to keep sprinkler heads in good shape.
- Spring is a great time to give your irrigation system a checkup to ensure it's working efficiently.
- Pruning properly can help your plants use water more efficiently.

CONSERVATION TIPS

GENERAL OUTDOOR

- Winterize outdoor spigots when temperatures dip below freezing to prevent pipes from leaking or bursting.
- For more immediate hot water and energy savings, insulate hot water pipes.
- Use a commercial car wash that recycles water. Or, wash your car on the lawn, and you'll water your grass at the same time.
- Use a hose nozzle or turn off the water while you wash your car. You'll save up to 100 gallons every time.
- Wash your pets outdoors, in an area of your lawn that needs water.
- When cleaning out fish tanks, give the nutrient-rich water to your non-edible plants.
- When you give your pet fresh water, don't throw the old water down the drain. Use it to water your trees or shrubs.
- Use a broom instead of a hose to clean patios, sidewalks and driveways, and save water every time.
- Set water softeners for a minimum number of refills to save both water and chemicals, plus energy, too.
- Report broken pipes, leaky hydrants and errant sprinklers to property owners or your local water provider.
- Know where your master water shut-off valve is located. Were a pipe to burst, this could save gallons of water and prevent damage.