

Conservation Tip

Most leaks result from worn washers in the household faucets and shower heads. These fixtures should be checked periodically for even the smallest leaks. Repairing this type of leak is as easy as replacing the washer or “o” ring.

The toilet is one of the most common water wasters but its leaks tend to be harder to notice than faucet leaks. Most toilet leaks occur at the overflow pipe, flapper valve or at the plunger ball inside the tank. Although you may not see or hear water running, your toilet may have a silent leak. Drop a little food coloring in the tank and wait approximately 15 minutes, if it appears in the bowl, you have a silent leak. Also the water level in the tank should come up to about a half inch or so below the overflow pipe.

Things You Can Do to Conserve Water

Follow these steps and you'll be on your way to being a smarter water user.

- Check every faucet in your home for leaks. Just a slow drip can waste 15 to 20 gallons a day. Fix it and you save almost 6,000 gallons a year.
- Don't use your toilet as an ashtray or wastebasket. Every time you flush a cigarette butt or tissue paper you waste as much as 7 gallons of water.
- Place food coloring in each toilet tank. Don't flush for several minutes to see if the color shows up in the bowl. It is very common for these “Invisible” toilet leaks to occur and to waste as much as 100 gallons a day.
- Put plastic bottles in your toilet tank. Put a couple of inches of sand or pebbles in each of two plastic bottles, and then fill them with water. Place the bottles safely away from the operating mechanism in your toilet tank. This will displace the water and may save as much as ten gallons a day.
- The average shower uses 5 to 10 gallons of water per minute. Soap up, wash up and rinse off. Keep it short. Your local hardware store will have inexpensive water-saving shower heads or restrictors that are easy to install.
- Take a bath. It only takes 6 inches of water in your tub and it uses less water than all but the shortest shower.
- Don't let the water run while you are brushing your teeth or while you are shaving.
- Use automatic dish washers and clothes washers for full loads only. Even when there are short cycles available it is more efficient to wait until you have a full load.
- If you wash dishes by hand, do not let the water run for rinsing. If you have two sinks fill one with soapy water to wash and one with clear water to rinse. If you only have one sink, stack the dishes until you are done washing and rinse all of them at one time with a spray device if available.

- Keep bottles water for drinking in the refrigerator. Running tap water to cool it off for drinking is wasteful.
- Water you lawn only when it is needed. You can tell when your lawn needs water by stepping on the grass. If it springs back up when you move, it doesn't need to be watered.
- Water your lawn and/or garden in the early morning before it gets hot. Try to avoid watering when it is windy.
- When you water your lawn make sure you do it long enough for the moisture to soak to the roots where it does the most good.
- Position the sprinkler so it waters only the lawn not the sidewalk or driveway.
- Put a layer of mulch around trees and plants to slow evaporation of moisture and to discourage weed growth.
- Use a broom, not a hose, to clean driveways and sidewalks.
- Don't run the hose to wash your car. Use a bucket to wash your car and the hose to only rinse it.
- Frequently inspect all pipes and fixtures in your home for leaks, REPAIR ALL LEAKS IMMEDIATELY!

Did You Know?

- A leak the size of a 1/16" stream can waste nearly 74,000 gallons of water.
- Only 1% of the world's water supply is available to meet all the humanity's needs. 97% is salt water and 2% is ice.
- Every glass of water served in a restaurant requires another two glasses of water to wash and rinse the glass.
- For the price of a 16 ounce bottle of soda, 75 cents, nearly 750 gallons of treated water are delivered to your home.
- If everyone in the United States flushed the toilet just one less time per day, we could save enough water to fill a lake approximately one mile long, a mile wide and four feet deep every day.
- About two thirds of the human body is water.
- It takes more than 39,000 gallons of water to manufacture a car.
- The five Great Lakes account for about 20% of the world's available fresh water supply.
- Approximately one million miles of pipelines and aqueducts carry water in the Unites States and Canada. That's enough to circle the earth 40 times.