

Saving Water Inside the Home

We can all do our part to reduce impacts of limited water supplies– **and we can start by conserving the water we use today.** Here are some helpful and common tips for saving water inside the home.

- **Monitor your water bill:** Checking your water bill for unusually-high water use can alert you to leaks in your home.
- **Know your baseline water use:** If your water use seems high, first determine if the increase is due to changes in your daily routine. If not, you may have a leak.
- **Periodically check for water leaks:** If it's easy to find, check your water meter before and after a two-hour period when no water is being used. If the meter does not read exactly the same, you probably have a leak. Common household leaks include: running toilets, dripping faucets, and other leaking valves. If leaks are found, repairing them in a timely manner will not only conserve water, but will save money by reducing your water bill.
- **Wash only full loads:** The average American household uses a significant amount of its indoor water running the clothes washer and dishwasher. Just one partially full load can waste 5 – 10 gallons of water.
- **Wash produce in a bowl or pan:** Avoid continually running water to clean those fruits and veggies. You can also save water by composting your food, instead of running it down the garbage disposal. Composting saves water every time.
- **Defrost food in the fridge:** Rather than using running water to thaw food, for water efficiency as well as food safety, defrost food in the refrigerator.
- **Keep drinking water in the fridge, re-purpose those ice cubes:** Instead of running the tap until the water turns cold, keep a pitcher on hand in the fridge. This way, no water goes down the drain. Drop unused or fallen ice cubes into a houseplant instead of discarding them.

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- **Turn off the water faucet while brushing your teeth:** Doing so will save up to 4 gallons per minute. That's up to 200 gallons a week for a family of four.
- **Plug the sink while shaving:** Plug the sink instead of running the water to rinse your razor and save up to 300 gallons per month.
- **Flush only when necessary:** Don't use the toilet to flush tissues. Drop tissues in the trash instead of flushing them.
- **Shorten your shower:** Trimming a minute or two off your normal shower time can save up to 150 gallons per month. Keeping the shower time to less than 5 minutes can save the average household up to 1,000 gallons per month. Turning the water off while washing your hair can save up to 150 gallons a month.
- **Retrofit old showerheads, faucets, and aerators:** You can save up to 40 percent of the water used for showering by replacing an older showerhead with a water efficient model. Look for WaterSense® models, which use less than 2 gallons per minute. Your local water provider may offer water conservation kits that often include a water-efficient showerhead and other water-reducing devices. Replacing old, inefficient faucets and aerators with WaterSense® labeled models can save the average family 700 gallons of water each year. Some water suppliers offer indoor water conservation kits that include water-efficient faucet aerators.
- **Replace that old toilet:** Toilets installed before 1994 can use up to 6 gallons per flush. By replacing old, inefficient toilets with more water-efficient WaterSense® labeled models, the average family can reduce water used for toilets by 20 to 60 percent – or close to 13,000 gallons of water conserved every year! You can also save \$170 per year in water costs, and \$3,400 over the lifetime of the toilet. Many municipal water providers offer a rebate for replacing an old toilet with one that uses no more than 1.28 gallons per flush.
- **Consider a dual-flush toilet:** It has two flush options: a half-flush for liquid waste and a full-flush for solid waste. A standard water-efficient toilet uses approximately 1.28 gallons per flush, which is about the amount of water a dual-flush toilet uses for the solid waste option. The half-flush option uses about 0.9 gallon per flush. An average family of four can save approximately 7,000 gallons per year by switching to a dual-flush toilet.
- **Determine how much water you use:** Access the Alliance for Water Efficiency's water calculator to get an estimate of how much water your household uses. The calculator also compares your estimated water usage to an average home and a highly efficient home. Visit www.home-water-works.org/calculator to get started.

For more information, visit owrd.info/savewater