

Water Conservation Is Always Important

Checking for leaks, taking shorter showers and practicing sound outdoor watering principles can reduce water bills and conserve this precious natural resource.

Efficient use of our water resources should always be practiced, not just when rainfall is significantly below average for the year. Water is a resource that cannot be manufactured.

Ways to Save Water Indoors

- About 75 percent of the water used in a home is used in the bathroom, 11 percent in the kitchen and 14 percent to wash clothes.
- Check all water connections for leaks. A slowly leaking faucet can use up to 170 gallons of water each day.
- To check for toilet leaks, put a few drops of dye in the tank. Your fixture needs adjustment or repair if the dye appears in the bowl.
- Check for leaks in the underground pipe by turning off all faucets. Then look at your water meter. If it's running, you have a leak.
- Install a low-flow shower head that limits the flow to less than three gallons per minute. This can cut in half the water used in a shower and is the single most effective conservation step.
- Taking a shower instead of a bath will usually save water. Limiting showering time will help, too. A 10-minute shower with a conventional shower head uses about 55 gallons of water. If you take baths rather than showers, reduce the water level by one or two inches from what you have been using.
- Putting a displacement device in your toilet tank can save up to 20 percent of the water being used. Place two one-quart plastic bottles weighted with stones and filled with water into the toilet tank. This reduces the amount of water in the tank and still leaves enough for flushing. Do not use bricks because they crumble and can cause damage to the fixture. Toilets manufactured prior to the 1980s use 5 to 7 gallons per flush without a displacement device. Displacement devices do not work as well in newer toilets that use 3.5 gallons or less per flush.
- Turning the water off while brushing your teeth can save about two gallons of water.
- Pond water in the sink for shaving instead of letting the water run.
- Install faucet aerators to cut water consumption.
- A washing machine uses 32 to 59 gallons per cycle. When doing laundry, wash only when you have a full load.

Ways to Reduce Outdoor Water Use

- When washing the car, wash it on the lawn to recycle the water. Use a bucket of soapy water and save the hose for rinsing.
- For the past several years, residential and commercial landscapes have used more than 25 percent of the total water consumption in urban areas of Texas. Watering a landscape properly means watering without runoff and to a depth of six inches.
- Water only when the grass needs watering. The grass will turn an off color and footprints will remain when it needs water.
- When it needs water, water deeply. This promotes deep roots and healthy grass. An inch of water will generally penetrate the soil to a depth of six inches.

- Water slowly for better absorption. With clay soils, turn off the sprinkler when runoff occurs. Wait 20 minutes for water to absorb into ground. Dig a test hole to see how deeply it absorbed. Repeat steps until the water penetrates six inches deep.
- Never water on windy days.
- Mulch two to three times a year with organic matter on flower, garden and shrub beds. This slows evaporation.
- Water newly planted flowers and shrubs separately and more often so they can establish their root systems.
- Choose plants adapted to this region and soil conditions.
- Don't cut the grass too short during hot weather. Taller grass holds moisture better.

For more information, please contact the [Water Department](#) at 817-230-0500.