

# WATER CONSERVATION TIPS FOR CONSUMERS

The average Minnesota resident uses about 52 gallons per person per day.

Here's how you can reduce your water use when showering:

- Take shorter showers, which saves gallons of water.
- Use a shower timer and aim for a shower length of 3-5 minutes.
- Turn off the water while shampooing and lathering. Turn it back on to rinse.

Older shower heads, especially those installed before the 1980s, have high rates of water flow - as much as 8 gallons per minute. Low volume shower heads with improved spray patterns and aeration use as little as 2.5 gallons per minute. Efficient shower heads save as much as 13,000 gallons a year for an average household.

Toilets are one of the biggest sources of indoor water consumption, using almost 24 percent of a home's water. Toilet leaks can waste over 200 gallons of water every day. They are usually caused by a bad flapper or other easy-to-repair parts.

- Use food coloring or leak detection tablets are available at your hardware store.
- With the WaterSense label
- That are dual flush
- That use less than 1.6 gallons per flush

Conventional, top-loading washing machines use as much as 51 gallons of water per load. High efficiency, front loading washing machines use as little as 15 gallons. They also wash clothes more gently.

To save both water and money when you wash:

- Only full loads of laundry
- Lightly soiled laundry in shorter cycles
- Use less detergent in high-efficiency washers
- Use cold water

Faucets in kitchens and restrooms are the fourth largest source of home water consumption.

- Newer, low-volume faucets use aeration and flow restrictors that maintain performance while using less water. If your faucets are older, you can benefit from installing aerator flow restrictors on faucets.
- Water softeners allow soap to work more effectively and reduce the amount of water used for washing. Check with your city before purchasing a water softener as some cities' water utilities provide softer water. Older models of water softeners waste excessive water and salt by cycling more often than necessary.

Proactive efforts to find and fix leaks save water and money for homeowners and prevent water damage.

Use your water meter to determine if there is a leak:

- Turn off all water-using appliances.
- Check your water meter, it should not be turning or changing numbers.
- Make note of the number and check again in an hour.
- If the number changes, there is a leak.
- Most undetected leaks in a home are in toilets or clothes washers. Check these appliances first.

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## Lawn and yard

- Morning before 10am is the best time to water most lawns. Rising heat later in the day tends to steal water by evaporation.
- A lush green lawn requires 1 to 1 ½ inches of water a week.
- If you let your grass grow about 1 ½ to 2 inches in the summer, water loss will be reduced.
- Avoid watering on windy or in the heat of the day.
- Monitor sprinklers by setting a timer and not leaving them unattended.
- Lawns that are frequently aerated absorb water better.
- Hi nitrogen fertilizers stimulate lawn growth and increase water requirements.
- Thatch build-up on a lawn can create a rapid run-off situation. Every spring the lawn should be raked and dead grass removed.
- Sprinklers throwing large drops in a flat pattern are more effective than those with a fine high spray.
- Forget about watering streets and driveways.
- Mulch shrubs and other plantings so the soil holds moisture longer.
- When possible, flood irrigate vegetables and flower gardens rather than using sprinklers. Irrigation allows deeper soaking with less water. Sprinklers result in a high evaporation loss of water.

## WATER USE HABITS

ACTIVITY	TYPICAL USAGE	GOOD WATER SAVING HABIT
Showering	20-40 gallons (about 5 per minute)	5 gallons (wet down, soap up, rinse off,
Tub Bathing	36 gallons for a full tub	10-15 gallons
Toilet Flushing	6 gallons	1.6 gallon with new standard toilet
Teeth Brushing	2 gallons	1 pint (wet, brush, rinse briefly)
Hand Washing	2 gallons (tap running)	1 gallon (fill basin, rinse briefly)
Shaving	3-5 gallons (tap running)	1 gallon (fill basin, rinse briefly)
Dish Washing	20 gallons (tap running)	5 gallons (wash, rinse in pan or sink)
Dishwasher	15 gallons (full cycle)	Do only full loads
Clothes Washer	36-60 gallons (full cycle)	Do only full loads
Outdoor Watering	5-10 gallons per minute	Be sensible

The [EPA WaterSense](#) (link is external) website has more information on conserving water such as:

- Water budget tools
- Water efficiency certification guidelines
- Inspection assistance