



BILL HOWE

Plumbing, Heating & Air Conditioning

Water Saving Tips

Indoor Tips

Use these tips to save money in your home and protect one of our most valuable resources.

- Verify that your home is leak free. Many homes have hidden water leaks. Read 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, there is a leak.
- Install a hot water recirculation system. We don't waste water waiting for it to heat up.
- Reduce water pressure in your house to reduce the flow rate of water.
- An H.E.T toilet or an ultra low flush toilet can save you more than 40 gallons of water *every day*.
- Consider adding a grey water system from your laundry system. You can use it to water your lawns and landscaping.
- Check for toilet tank leaks by adding food coloring to the tank. If the toilet is leaking, color will appear in the toilet bowl within 30 minutes. Check the toilet for worn out, corroded or bent parts. Most replacement parts are inexpensive, readily available and easily installed. (Flush as soon as test is done, since food coloring may stain tank.)
- If the toilet handle frequently sticks in the flush position letting water run constantly, replace or adjust it.
- Every day, there are many simple little things we can do around the house to save water, money and help the environment.
- Turn off the water when you brush your teeth and save 3 gallons each time.
- Shorten your showers by one or two minutes and save 5 gallons per day.
- Fix leaky faucets and save more than 20 gallons per day.
- Wash only full loads of laundry saves 15 to 50 gallons per load.
- Talk to your family and friends about saving water. If everyone does a little, we all benefit a lot.
- The most water efficient methods for cooking vegetables are microwaving, steaming or using a pressure cooker. You can also cut down on water loss by using tight lids on pots and simmering instead of boiling rapidly.
- Installing [water efficient](#) taps or [tap aerators](#) is a great, inexpensive way to cut your water usage without you even noticing.



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- Put the plug in the sink when washing your hands instead of holding them under running water.
- Thaw frozen foods before you need them or use the microwave instead of placing them under running water.
- Prevent taps from leaking by turning taps off lightly and replace washers as soon as they begin to leak.
- It's best to wait until you have a full load in your dishwasher before using it. This saves water and energy, and reduces the amount of detergent entering the sewerage system.
- Washing fruit and veggies in a half-filled sink instead of under running water is a great way to cut back on water wastage.
- Rinsing your dishes in a plugged sink rather than under a running tap saves water and is just as easy and effective.
- Try to use phosphate-free, eco-friendly detergents and cleaning products - there's a great range to choose from these days and they're much better for our environment.
- Remember to regularly clean the lint filter on your washing machine.
- Most washing machines have a load adjustment button or dial, so try to set this to match the amount of washing you're doing. If your machine doesn't have a load adjustment function, try to wait until you have enough washing for a full load.
- Installing a low-flow showerhead can give you a great shower and save you around 2 gallons of water a minute. They also save you energy costs, as you'll use less hot water.
- To rinse your razor, run a little water into a plugged sink. Rinsing your razor under a running tap wastes lots of water.
- Never pour water down the drain when there may be another use for it such as watering a plant or garden, or for cleaning.
- Place a bucket in the shower to catch excess water and use this to water plants. The same technique can be used when washing dishes or vegetables in the sink.
- In the shower, turn water on to get wet; turn off to lather up; then turn back on to rinse off. Repeat when washing your hair.
- Insulate your water pipes. You'll get hot water faster and avoid wasting water while it heats up.



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- Kitchen sink disposals require lots of water to operate properly. Start a compost pile as an alternate method of disposing of food waste instead of using a garbage disposal. Garbage disposals also can add 50 percent to the volume of solids in a septic tank, which can lead to malfunctions and maintenance problems.
- Consider installing an instant water heater on your kitchen sink so you don't have to let the water run while it heats up. This will reduce water heating costs for your household.
- When washing dishes by hand, fill one sink or basin with soapy water. Quickly rinse under a slow-moving stream from the faucet.
- Never install a water-to-air heat pump or air-conditioning system. Newer air-to-air models are just as efficient and do not waste water.
- Don't let water run while shaving or washing your face. Brush your teeth first while waiting for water to get hot, then wash or shave after filling the basin.
- If you have a well at home, check your pump periodically. Listen to hear if the pump kicks on and off while water is not being used. If it does, you have a leak.
- Avoid flushing the toilet unnecessarily. Dispose of tissues, insects and other similar waste in the trash rather than the toilet.



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Outdoor Tips

There are many simple things we can do in our gardens to save water, money and the environment.

- Water your yard only before 8 a.m. to reduce evaporation and interference from wind and you can save up to 25 gallons per day.
- Install a smart sprinkler controller and save up to 40 gallons per day.
- Use a broom instead of a hose to clean driveways and sidewalks for a savings of 150 gallons each time.
- Check your sprinkler system for leaks, overspray and broken sprinkler heads 500 gallons a month.
- *Mulch! Save hundreds of gallons a year by using organic mulch around plants to reduce evaporation.*
- Try to keep the water level of your pool halfway up the skimmer opening. Overfilling the pool stops the skimmer working efficiently and wastes water.
- A pool cover is a clever way to reduce evaporation and the need to regularly top up your pool's water level. Without a cover, more than half the water in your pool can evaporate over a year.
- If you have a swimming pool, consider a new water-saving pool filter. A single back flushing with a traditional filter uses 180 to 250 gallons of water
- Keep all your kitchen scraps, lawn clippings and garden waste - they're perfect for homemade compost, which your soil will love.
- If you need a watering system consider installing a drip irrigation system. It will cut wastage by making sure the water goes only where you need it.
- A good soaking every now and then with a hand-held hose will help make your lawn more drought resistant by encouraging deeper roots.
- To assist the establishment of your new lawn and to minimize the amount of water it requires, it is recommended that you apply a light top dressing to your lawn. Talk to your local nursery or landscape supplier about a suitable weed-free, sand based, organic top dressing mix.



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Outdoor Tips Cont.

- When planting new garden beds, group plants with similar watering needs together.
- Regularly check your outdoor taps, pipes and plumbing fixtures for leaks. Just one dripping tap can waste 2,000 litres a month.
- Use deep mulch and add compost to your soil. These add nutrients and help to retain moisture and reduce evaporation.
- It's best to water the roots and soil around plants rather than spraying the leaves and flowers.
- Watering your garden in the cool of the early morning, or in the evening reduces water loss through evaporation.
- Take some time to relax in your garden and water by hand with a can or trigger nozzle. It's one of the best ways to make sure your plants get just the right amount of water.
- Paths, patios and driveways must never be hosed. Use a broom, rake or outdoor blower or vacuum instead.
- When washing your car, park it on the lawn and use a bucket for washing and rinsing. This way you can save water, as well as water and fertilize your lawn - car shampoos use phosphates that are similar to many fertilizers.
- When deciding on a lawn type, go for slow growing, water saving varieties like Palmetto. They have deep roots for drought tolerance and they don't need mowing as much as other varieties.
- Choosing local native varieties and other water wise plants attracts wildlife and means less maintenance and watering.
- Watering a level garden for longer, but less often, promotes deeper roots and hardier, healthier, drought tolerant plants. Remember to only use a hand-held hose or watering can or install drip irrigation. (About 12 millimetres of water an hour is enough for most sessions.)
- Don't allow sprinklers to water your street, driveway or sidewalk. Position them so water lands on the lawn and shrubs... not the paved areas.
- Raise the lawn mower blade to at least three inches or to its highest level. A higher cut encourages grass roots to grow deeper, shades the root system and holds soil moisture better than a closely-clipped lawn.
- Avoid over fertilizing your lawn. Fertilizer applications increase the need for water. Apply fertilizers which contain slow-release, water-insoluble forms of nitrogen.



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- Avoid the installation of ornamental water features (such as fountains) unless the water is recycled.
- Do not leave sprinklers or hoses unattended. A garden hose can pour out 600 gallons or more in only a few hours. Use a kitchen timer to remind yourself to turn sprinklers off.
- Consider using a commercial car wash that recycles water. If you wash your own car, park on the grass and use a hose with an automatic shut-off nozzle.
- Use a shut-off nozzle on your hose which can be adjusted down to a fine spray so that water flows only as needed. When finished, turn it off at the faucet instead of at the nozzle to avoid leaks. Check hose connectors to make sure plastic or rubber washers are in place. Washers prevent leaks.



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Other Great Ideas

Tell others of the benefits and save not only resources, but your tax dollars.

- Report all significant water losses (broken pipes, open hydrants, errant sprinklers, abandoned free-flowing wells, etc.) to the property owner, local authorities or your water agency.
- Encourage your school system and local government to help develop and promote a water conservation ethic among children and adults.
- Support projects that will lead to an increased use of reclaimed waste water for irrigation and other uses.
- Encourage your friends and neighbors to be part of a water-conscious community. Promote water conservation in community newsletters, on bulletin boards and by example. Encourage your friends, neighbors and co-workers to "do their part."
- Conserve water because it is the right thing to do. Don't waste water just because someone else is footing the bill, such as when you are staying at a hotel.