

OUTDOOR TIPS

Plant water-efficient, well-adapted, and/or native shrubs, trees, and grasses. Choose plants that are drought and heat tolerant and can survive the minimum winter temperatures in your area. In odd-shaped areas, use drought-tolerant groundcover instead of grass. Many cities provide lists of water-efficient plants.

Don't abuse the benefits of an automatic sprinkler system by over-watering. Set it to provide thorough but infrequent watering. Check sprinkler heads regularly to make sure they are working properly. Install rain shut-off devices and adjust sprinklers to eliminate coverage on pavement. For plants that need more water, use a hose or watering can to give them additional water.

Prevent evaporation of water. Water lawns early in the morning. Never water on windy days. Use drip irrigation systems for bedded plants, trees, or shrubs and use low-angle sprinklers for lawns. Cover pools and spas. This can save the equivalent of your pool volume each year!

Harvest the rain. Buy a rain barrel or a cistern and collect the water from your gutters to water your plants.

Use your water efficiently. Don't waste water by cleaning patios or sidewalks with it; use a broom.

Taller grass holds moisture better. Don't cut more than one-third of its length at one time. Don't scalp lawns when mowing during hot weather. Leave lawn clippings on the lawn instead of bagging.

Use lots of mulch around your shrubs and trees. It will retain moisture, reduce run-off, moderate soil temperatures, and help with weed control.

Don't over-fertilize! Get a soil kit to determine what nutrients your soil needs. If you apply fertilizer only in the spring and fall, your grass will be healthy, use less water, and require less mowing.

Use a car wash that recycles water. If you are washing your car at home, use a bucket of soapy water and a hose nozzle that shuts off the water while you scrub.

Did you know that as of September 1, 2013, all Texas homeowners can save water with drought-resistant landscaping? Some homeowner associations may require preliminary approval of any major changes to the landscape, but Senate Bill 198 (83rd Texas Legislature) prohibits an association from restricting a property owner's decision to make water-wise landscape choices.



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WATER IQ
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www.epa.gov/watersense

WATER CONSERVING TIPS



USING WATER MORE EFFICIENTLY
will not only save money but, more importantly, will protect the quality of life of current and future Texans.

With the vastness of Texas, it's easy to forget two important facts about our state: we are subject to frequent droughts and our population is projected to nearly double in the next 50 years.

To ensure that we have enough water for current and future Texans, we need to reduce the amount of water we waste. A few small changes in your water use habits can make a huge difference in water savings.

POSSIBLE WATER SAVINGS

- High-efficiency toilets, water-efficient washing machines, rainwater harvesting systems, and water-efficient landscaping can all help reduce household water demands.
- Water-efficient showerheads and aerators for faucets can significantly reduce the amount of water you use. In fact, installing a water-efficient showerhead is one of the most effective water-saving steps you can take inside your house.
- Leaky faucets and toilets can waste thousands of gallons of water monthly, and they are inexpensive to fix.
- Outdoor water use can account for more than 30 percent of total home water use. With proper management, you can have a beautiful, healthy landscape and reduce your water use significantly. This can amount to hundreds of dollars in savings a year in water and wastewater costs.



INDOOR TIPS

Bathroom

- Replace your showerhead with a water-efficient model.
- Get in the shower as soon as the water becomes warm enough.
- Take short showers.
- Reduce the level of water used in a bathtub by half, or better yet, take a short shower.
- Turn off the water while you are shaving. Fill the sink with an inch of hot water instead of letting the water run continuously.
- Replace your old toilet with a high-efficiency toilet that uses 1.3 gallons per flush.
- Check toilets for leaks. Simply take the top off of your toilet tank and add a few drops of food coloring or a dye tablet to the water in the tank. Do not flush the toilet. If the coloring appears in the bowl within a few minutes, the toilet has a leak that most likely can be fixed by replacing the flapper or rubber washer. Cheap fix, huge savings!
- Never use the toilet to dispose of trash.
- Don't waste water when brushing your teeth or washing your hands. Shut off the water until it's time to rinse.
- Look for the WaterSense label when installing or replacing plumbing fixtures. They are tested and certified to perform as well or better than their less efficient counterparts and on average are 20 percent more water efficient.
- The next time you use one of these water-saving tips when you take a shower, wash your hands, brush your teeth, or flush the toilet, congratulate yourself for doing your part to help protect our precious water resources!

Kitchen

- Run the dishwasher only when full. This practice will save water, energy, detergent, and money. If your machine has a quick wash or light duty setting, use it!
- Install faucet aerators. You'll never notice the difference, and you'll cut your sink water consumption in half!
- Dry scrape dishes instead of rinsing. Your dishwasher will take care of the rest.
- Use garbage disposals sparingly. They can waste water unnecessarily.
- Soak pans rather than scrubbing them with the water running.
- Rinse your vegetables in a pan of cold water; it doesn't take gallons of water to get the dirt off.

Laundry room

- Wash only full loads.
- Use the lowest water level setting on the washing machine for light or partial loads whenever possible.
- Use cold water as often as possible to save energy and conserve hot water for uses that cold water cannot serve.
- Conventional washing machines can use up to twice as many gallons of water per load compared to high efficiency machines.

Additional tips

- Don't ignore leaky faucets; they are often easy and inexpensive to repair. Turn off the valve under the sink until you get around to repairing the leak. A slow drip can waste as much as 170 gallons of water each day and will add to your water bill.
- Know where your master water shut-off valve is in case a pipe bursts. Insulate hot water pipes. You won't waste water waiting for it to get hot, and you will save energy.
- Install water-softening systems only when necessary and, if you have one, save water and salt by running the minimum amount of regenerations necessary to maintain water softness.
- Replace water-to-air heat pumps and air conditioners with air-to-air if you are purchasing new units. They are just as efficient and do not waste water.
- Find other uses for water rather than letting it go down the drain. Use a bucket to capture water in the shower or sink while waiting for it to get hot, then use that water on your landscape.

