



Water-Use It Wisely

We all use water every day! It is essential for drinking, bathing, cooking, cleaning and a whole lot more.

But a lot of water gets wasted. This happens both indoors and outdoors in many households. This is often due to water use habits and appliances that are not water-efficient. Leaky pipes and fixtures are also big water-wasters.

Saving water has benefits. They include saving money, saving energy and helping the environment. Increased demand for water has already led to shortages in many communities. Conserving water now can mean we'll have more to use in the future.

Everyone in the family can help save water. If the whole family makes a few small changes in how they use water, you can save hundreds or even thousands of gallons each year.

1. **Evaluate your water habits.** Have a family discussion about water use and ways to cut down. There are simple things to do to start saving water today!
2. **Look for leaks – and repair them right away.** Most leaks are easy to detect and repair. For sinks, check faucets and pipes for dripping water. For toilets, add food coloring to the tank water and check the bowl in 15 minutes. If there is color in the toilet bowl, it means there's a leak.
3. **Install water-saving devices.**
 - a. Aerators (devices that mix air with water)
 - b. Low-flow fixtures (such as shower heads, flow restrictors or cut off valves)
 - c. Displacement devices to reduce the amount of water used in older toilets).
4. **Save water while preparing food.**
 - a. Use a brush and bowl of water to clean food instead of letting the water run.
 - b. Thaw frozen food in your refrigerator or microwave, not under running water.
 - c. Reuse water when you can. For example, when you cook vegetables, save cooking water for soup stock.
5. **Know the proper settings on your washer.** Use the load selector to match the water level to the size of the load. Presoak heavily soiled items.
6. **Limit your use of the garbage disposal.** Compost!
7. **Wash dishes wisely.** Wash only full loads in a dishwasher. If you wash by hand, scrape dishes (but don't pre rinse) and soak pots and pans before washing. Don't run water continuously.