



**Our Mission: To provide the latest information, education, and technical assistance to protect our public waters and improve the quality of life in Minnesota.**

*Excellence in Training and Technical Assistance*

## MRWA Water Conservation Facts

### Water Conservation Tips for Consumers

#### Bathroom

##### Toilets:

- If you happen to live in an older home with original fixtures, you may be flushing at a rate of 5 to 7 gallons per flush. You can save water per flush by installing a toilet dam.
- Your toilet is not a wastebasket - don't use it to flush away cigarette butts or Kleenex.
- Most new toilets presently available on the market are engineered for low volume use.
- Put a few drops of food coloring in your tank. If colored water shows in the bowl without flushing, there's a leak and repairs are needed.

##### Bathing:

Bathing usually consumes the second greatest quantity of water in the home.

- A shower generally uses less water than a bath.
- Do your showering and hair washing in one step.
- Fill the tub on 1/4 full. This is enough to cover an adult's body or float a child's toy.
- Most showers can be fitted with a flow restrictor or low-volume head to conserve water.
- Don't turn the shower on until you're ready to step in.

##### Sink:

- Don't leave water running while washing your face, shaving or brushing your teeth.
- An electric razor uses less energy than it takes to heat up the water for razor shaving.

#### Kitchen and Laundry

Twenty-five percent of the daily household water use occurs in the kitchen and laundry with much of this water being wasted.

##### Cooking:

- Remove frozen foods from freezer before you're ready to use them so you won't have to use running water to hasten thawing.
- Always use lids on pots and pans.
- Use the smallest amount of water possible in cooking to save both water and nutrients. Most frozen vegetables require about 1/2 to 1 cup of water, not half a saucepan.
- Rather than letting the water run while peeling vegetables, rinse them briefly at the beginning and end of the chore.
- Don't let the faucet run for a cold drink. Keep a jug of water cooling in the refrigerator.

## Washing Dishes:

- When washing dishes by hand, use a stopper in the sink and don't rinse with running water.
- Use low-sudsing detergents - they require less rinsing.
- Adding 1/4 to 1/2 cup of vinegar to your wash water cuts grease more readily than hot water alone.
- Run your dishwasher only when you have a full load.
- Use the prewash, rinse-hold and scrub cycles of your dishwasher only when necessary.

## Laundry:

- If your washer has a variable load control, always adjust water levels to fit the size of the load. This saves both water and the energy needed to heat the extra hot water.
- Run your washer when you have a full load.
- Remember that in soft water clothes get cleaner and require less detergent and less rinse water.
- When buying a new washing machine, look for models with water or energy-saving controls.

## All Around the House

- Check every faucet for leaks. Just a slow drip can waste 15 or 20 gallons a day.
- Use a broom, not the hose, to clean the garage, sidewalks, and driveway. Wash the car from a bucket. Use the hose only to rinse it off afterwards.
- Insulate the hot water heater, pay special attention to the insulation qualities of the shell. Avoid buying a larger tank than is necessary for your needs.

## Lawn and Yard

- Morning is the best time to water most lawns. Before 10:00am is best of all because rising heat later on tends to steal a lot of water by evaporation. Another benefit is that grass and leaves have a chance to dry off quickly. Evening or night-time watering leave the grass wet and can allow lawn diseases to develop.
- A lush green lawn requires 1 to 1 1/2 inches of water a week. Keep in mind the amount of rainfall that might fall on your yard and adjust your watering schedule accordingly.
- If you let your grass grow to about 1 1/2 to 2 inches in the summer, water loss will be reduced because the blades will provide shade for the roots.
- Avoid watering when windy or in the heat of the day.
- Don't allow sprinklers to run unattended. Use a timer as a reminder when it's time to move or turn off the sprinkler.
- Lawns that are frequently aerated absorb water better.
- High nitrogen fertilizers stimulate lawn growth and increase water requirements.
- Thatch build-up in 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 fine, high sprays.
- Forget about watering streets, walks and driveways. They don't grow a thing.
- 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 high evaporation loss of water.



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