

In Home Water Conservation

Households can save as much as 25 gallons per person per day with in-home water conserving equipment and behavioral changes.

Seven key actions you can do to capture water savings around your home are:

- **Stop Leaks.** Check indoor water using appliances and devices for leaks. Many silent leaks allow water and your money to go down the drain. Another large water waster can be irrigation system leaks. Fix irrigation system leaks quickly.
- **Change behaviors.** Taking 4 minute showers, not rinsing dishes before loading the dishwasher, turning water off while shaving or brushing teeth, sweeping sidewalks rather than hosing off are all examples of possible behavior changes.
- **Replace your old toilet!** The toilet is the largest water user in your home. Most toilets installed before 1992 do not have a water saving 1.6 gallon per flush. For those who do make the flush efficient, hold the lever down to complete the flush cycle. This alleviates the need for a second flush.
- **Make sure each shower head releases 2.5 gallons per minute or less.** Nowadays, all showerheads sold are regulated to meet the 2.5 gallons per minute maximum requirement. To make the flow feel like more water is coming out, turn the head dial to reduce the number of sprays or inner spray settings.
- **Replace your clothes washer.** The washer is the second largest in-home water user. Energy Star™ rated washers that also have a Water Factor at or lower than 9.5, use 35 to 50 percent less water and 50 percent less energy per load. This saves you money on both water and energy bills.
- **Plan the right plants with proper landscape design and irrigation.** Select plants that are appropriate for your local climate conditions. Having a yard with 100 percent lawn turf area in a dry climate uses significant amounts of water. Also consider Xeriscape™ and a more natural landscape.
- **Water only what your plants need.** Don't water plants that do not need the water. Be attentive to your watering time. Maintain your irrigation system. Make sure your irrigation controller has a rain shutoff device.

Installing inexpensive, water saving devices in your home is another way to conserve water use. Many such devices are available. Installing low-flow faucet aerators on your kitchen and bathroom sinks is easy, inexpensive and saves water. Studies have shown that new faucet aerators can reduce daily per capita faucet water use by 13 percent and save more than 1,700 gallons of water per year.

While shower water usage is typically less than a washer or toilet, it is an area where reductions can be made as well. Take shorter showers. An efficient shower lasts 3 or 4 minutes, using only 7.5 gallons of water, as compared to an 8 minute shower using 17 gallons.

The water wasted while waiting for hot water is another issue. In new homes, this can be addressed by placing hot water heaters near points of hot water use. In other homes, one may simply need to catch the cold water and use it for watering plants or doing laundry. The waste may be as much as 3 gallons for each shower taken.

Remember: what you do affects the quality and quantity of the water you drink and use. By keeping that in mind, you are helping protect water resources now and in the future. Help save Texas water and make every drop count.

