

WATER

Conservation

Kitchen and Laundry



With water conservation efforts under way in parts of Oklahoma, here are a few water conservation tips from the Department of Environmental Quality.

Water is a valuable, fundamental resource that should not be wasted. Eventually it will recycle itself, but the clean water used in homes has limitations. If each person uses only what is needed, the natural water supply will always be adequate.

Kitchen and Laundry Tips

- Use your automatic dishwasher and automatic washing machine only for full loads, never for just a few items.
- If you wash dishes by hand, don't leave the water running continuously for rinsing. Fill one side of the sink with clean water for rinsing, or put the washed dishes in a rack and rinse them all at once with a spray attachment or a pan of hot water.
- Don't let the faucet run while you clean vegetables. Fill the sink or a pan with clean water to rinse. Re-use the water that vegetables are washed in for watering houseplants or for cleaning.

- Keep a bottle of drinking water in the refrigerator. Running the tap to cool the water for drinking is wasteful and the refrigerator water will be colder and more refreshing.
- Check faucets and pipes for leaks. Even a small leak can waste thousands of gallons in a month.
- Reduce the use of the garbage disposal, which requires a great deal of water for operation. Dispose of food scraps and peelings in the trash container or use food waste in a garden compost pile.
- Install flow restrictors in faucets.
- Keep faucet washers in good shape or use washerless faucets.

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Bathrooms



The most substantial reduction in personal water use can be made in the bathroom. Two-thirds of the water used in the average home is used in the bathroom, because many people take long showers or flush the toilet unnecessarily. Water conservation not only saves water, it saves energy used to heat the water.

Bathroom Tips

- Check the toilet for leaks. Put a few drops of food coloring in your toilet tank. If, without flushing, the color begins to appear in the bowl, you know you have a leak that needs to be repaired.
- Don't use the toilet for disposing of cigarette butts or other trash. Use the garbage can.
- Most toilets use between 1.6 to 7 gallons of water for every flush. If you have a toilet manufactured before January 1994, it is using 3.5-7 gallons of water per flush.
- To cut down on water used per flush by older model toilets, put plastic bottles filled with sand in your toilet tank. Place them safely away from the operating mechanism. (Do not use bricks, which disintegrate after a while and damage the mechanism.) Do not use this method for toilets that use 1.6 gallons or less to prevent proper toilet function.
- When replacing fixtures, install water conserving models. The price is about the same and it will save you money on your water bill.
- Install water-saving shower heads or flow restrictors. Your local hardware or plumbing supply stores stock inexpensive water-saving shower heads or restrictors that are easy to install.
- Limit the length of showers to 2 or 3 minutes. Consider turning the shower off while you soap up and turn it on again only to rinse.
- Rinse your razor in a few inches of water in the sink, rather than under running water.
- Turn off the tap while brushing your teeth. Use only enough water to wet the brush and rinse your mouth.
- Teach children to turn faucets off tightly after use.
- Check faucets and pipes for leaks. Even a small leak can waste thousands of gallons per month. Keep faucet washers in good shape or use washerless faucets.