Water Conservation Tips

DRINKING WATER

If you often drink tap water, keep a bottle or pitcher of water in the refrigerator so you will always have a supply of cold water for drinking. Fill the bottle after some other water use activity, such as washing clothes or bathing. That way you know the water will be fresh going into the bottle. Saving fresh water for later use negates having to let the water run for a long period each time you want a cool drink. Using ice cubes will provide a cool refreshing drink also.

In restaurants, have the wait staff provide you with drinking water only if you want it. Discourage automatic refills of glasses at the table when everyone has had their dinner or full.

FOOD PREPARATION

Use a soft brush to clean vegetables more quickly. Running the water while cleaning fruits and vegetables can waste up to 5 gallons of water. When thawing large frozen meats such as turkeys and other poultry, plan ahead and thaw them in the refrigerator rather than hastening thawing in warm water soaks. This will be safer and healthier in the long run.

GARBAGE DISPOSAL

Most garbage disposals require you to run cold water the entire time you are disposing of food wastes. Prepare ahead of time by having all the material you plan to dispose of, ready at the sink. This will help to minimize the amount of time the water will be running.

CLEANING POTS AND PANS

If you pre-rinse dishes before washing them, run the rinsing into larger pots and pans. Let the pots and pans soak for a while before cleaning. This will minimize the effort needed to clean them and reduce the amount of cleaning agent required, also resulting in the need for less rinse water. Wipe dinner plates before washing using discarded dinner napkins. Run the dishwasher only with a full load.

PERSONAL HYGIENE

When brushing your teeth, do not run the water constantly while at the sink but only when you are actually rinsing. The same may be done while shaving, or add a small amount of water to the basin to adequately rinse the razor. Allowing the water to run while brushing your teeth or shaving can waste up to 5 gallons of water.

If you bathe in a tub instead of taking a shower, do not overfill the tub. A full tub may hold over 50 gallons of water. When you first run the bath water, don't let the initial cold water run down the drain. Stopper the tub and save all the water. It will be warmed up by the hot water that follows. Allow small children to bathe together or successively in the same water, if possible.

Take shorter showers. The average five-minute shower uses 25 - 50 gallons of water. If your shower has a volume control, reduce the flow while you soap up and then rinse off with only enough water pressure to get the job done.

Do not use the toilet to flush items that could more properly go into the trash instead, such as tissues, paper towels and diapers.

HOUSEHOLD WATER LEAKS

Check all the household faucets for leaks, especially outside faucets and garden hose connections. Make repairs when necessary. A leak no matter how small can add up. A slow drip can waste 75 gallons a week. A steady drip can waste 200 gallons a week. A stream can waste 1000 gallons a week.

Check the toilet for leaks by adding a dye tablet or a few drops of food coloring into the toilet tank. If the dye gets into the toilet without having flushed, then a leak is present and must be fixed. Also, listen for the sound of water running out of the tank. Sometimes it's hard to see water leaking into the toilet but you might hear it. A leaky toilet can waste at least 60 gallons a day, 22,000 gallons a year

LAUNDRY

Be sure to use the load selector depending on the size laundry load you are washing. It is usually more economical to wash only full size loads, so wait until you have enough clothes to wash a full load. A fabric softener in the rinse water will help remove any remaining soapsuds instead of adding an extra rinse cycle. When buying a new washer, choose one that uses less water. The average wash-load uses between 35 to 50 gallons of water

LAWN AND GARDEN

Water lawns and gardens in the evening after the hottest time of day has passed. This will reduce evaporation and allow the moisture to sink into the soil. Water gradually and lightly to prevent wasted runoff, and only water when absolutely necessary. Employ handheld watering methods in small gardens. Turn off automatic sprinklers during times of wet weather to prevent needless waste and over-watering.

When planning an ornamental garden, incorporate plant species that don't require as much water. Mulch heavily wherever practical to prevent moisture loss. In dry periods, allow the grass to grow a little higher. This will reduce the tendency for your lawn to burn and will save water.

BACKYARD POOLS

Fill your pool earlier in the season when demand for water is not as great. Do not fill it to the top where it can more easily splash out and be wasted. Cover your pool when not in use to prevent evaporation. This will help to keep it cleaner and also reduce your disinfectant use.

For wading pools, at the end of the day use the water for watering plants, shrubs and gardens. Instead of wasting the water, it will be put to good use.

CARWASHING

Wash your car in sections, from top to bottom, with quick rinses in between. Also, wash in the shade. That way the sun is less likely to dry soapsuds onto the car requiring excessive rinsing. Garden hoses should never be left running while washing cars. Hoses with shut-off nozzles that drip can waste gallons of water.

MISCELLANEOUS TIPS

Insulate your hot water pipes to reduce the waste of endless gallons waiting for the hot water to get to the faucet.
Water house plants with leftover drinking water.
Where practical, securely wrap and place into the trash those garbage items that otherwise would have been run through the garbage disposal.
Minimize washing down sidewalks and driveways. Doing so can waste 10 gallons or more a minute.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

To give you an idea of daily water consumption per a household; the average person uses a minimum of 80 to100 gallons of water per a day, per person.