

What You Can Do

In the bathroom...

- Never use your toilet as a wastebasket
- Don't let the water run while shaving or brushing your teeth
- Take short showers instead of tub baths
- Turn off the water flow while soaping or shampooing
- Before pouring water down the drain, consider other uses for it, such as watering a plant or garden

In the laundry...

- Use the appropriate water level or load size selection on the washing machine
- Wash full loads whenever possible

In the kitchen...

- Keep drinking water in the refrigerator instead of letting the faucet run until the water is cool
- Wash fruits and vegetables in a basin
- Use a vegetable brush to clean produce

- Do not use water to defrost frozen foods; thaw them in the refrigerator overnight
- Use a dishpan for washing and rinsing dishes
- Add food wastes to your compost pile instead of using the garbage disposal
- Operate the dishwasher only when completely full

Outdoors...

- Sweep driveways, sidewalks, and steps rather than hosing them off
- Wash the car from a bucket, or consider using a commercial car wash that recycles water
- When using a hose, control the flow with an automatic shutoff nozzle
- Avoid purchasing water toys that require a constant stream of water
- Lower the water level in your pool to reduce the amount of water splashed out
- Use a pool cover to reduce evaporation when the pool is not in use



Take a tour of the Water Saver Home

To learn more about what you can do in and around your home to use water more efficiently, take a virtual tour of the Water Saver Home at www.h2ouse.org on the Internet. With bold graphics, this web site provides user-friendly information on water use inside and outside the average home. You can learn about

water-saving devices, opportunities to save water and energy, tips for buying efficient products, maintenance and repair, and much more!

The Water Saver Home was developed by the California Urban Water Conservation Council in cooperation with EPA. The goal of the web site is to help homeowners learn how to use water efficiently.

A Message from the Administrator

Christine Todd Whitman



I believe water is the biggest environmental issue we face in the 21st Century in terms of both quality and quantity. In the 30 years since its passage, the Clean Water Act has dramatically increased the number of

waterways that are once again safe for fishing and swimming. Despite this great progress in reducing water pollution, many of the nation's waters still do not meet water quality goals. I challenge you to join President Bush and me to finish the business of restoring and protecting our nation's waters for present and future generations.

For More Information

For more information, contact EPA's Office of Wastewater Management or visit EPA's web site at www.epa.gov/owm/genwave.htm. For more information on ENERGY STAR clothes washers, visit www.energystar.gov/products/clotheswashers.

You may also contact:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Wastewater Management
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

202-564-0478

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Water (4101M)
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In celebration of the 30th anniversary of the Clean Water Act, EPA presents

Using Water Wisely in the Home



Using Water Wisely in the Home

Water efficiency plays an important role in protecting water sources and improving water quality. By using water wisely, you can save money and help protect our environment.

Water efficiency means using less water to provide the same benefit. There are many ways to increase water efficiency in your home—detecting and fixing

leaky faucets, installing high-efficiency clothes washers and toilets, and watering the lawn

and garden with the minimum amount of water needed. Since watering the landscape with an automatic irrigation system is likely the single largest use of water in the home, you can dramatically improve water efficiency by using proper irrigation and scheduling techniques such as cycling the sprinklers.

Using water-saving techniques not only can save you hundreds of dollars per year but also can reduce the amount of pollutants entering rivers, lakes, and streams. In addition, efficient water use can reduce water and wastewater treatment costs and the amount of energy used to treat, pump, and heat water. And it could help to ease the burden on water resources during drought conditions.

Although 80 percent of the earth's surface is covered by water, only 0.6 percent (6/1000) is available to be used in the home.

Did you know?

- Fixing a toilet that silently leaks 500 gallons of water per day might save nearly \$1,000 per year.

- Installing high-efficiency plumbing fixtures and appliances can help a typical family of four reduce indoor water use by one-third, save about \$95 per year

- on their water and sewer bill, and cut energy use by as much as 6 percent.

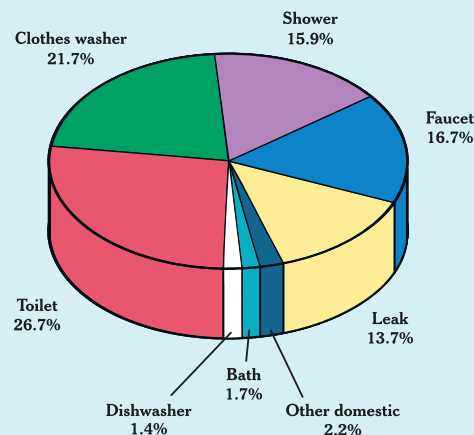
- Currently, about 8 percent of U.S. energy demand is used to treat, pump, and heat water.

- Using less water can lower energy demand, thereby reducing the amount of pollutants released from power plants.

- Water heating accounts for 19 percent of home energy use. If 20 percent of U.S. homes used high-efficiency clothes washers, the national energy savings would be enough to supply the needs of more than 1 million homes.

- Communities that institute broad water efficiency programs have been able to reduce overall water use by up to 20 percent, not only conserving water supplies and reducing water pollution but also cutting costs for new water and wastewater facilities.

How much water do we use?



How much do we spend on water?

The typical family of four spends \$820 per year on water and sewer charges, but costs can be twice that or more in some places because of higher rates or greater lawn watering and other outdoor uses. But that's just part of the cost.

American households also spend an average of \$230 per year to heat water. By changing appliances like the dishwasher and clothes washer and inefficient fixtures like showerheads and toilets, a family of four can save as much as \$210 per year in water, sewer, and energy costs.

How much water do we use?

Home water use varies considerably depending on household size, water use practices, climate, type of plumbing fixtures and appliances, and a number of other factors. The two largest water users are toilets and clothes washers. Note that nearly 14 percent of the water the typical homeowner pays for is never used—it leaks down the drain.

Outdoor water use averages about 117 gallons per home per day, or about 37 percent of total home water use. But outdoor use varies considerably by climate zone and can be two to three times greater than indoor water use in hot, dry areas of the country. How we use water outdoors might offer many opportunities for considerable savings.

Top Five Ways to Save

There are many ways to save water in and around your home. Here are a few that might get the best results.

Stop leaks Check all water-using appliances, equipment, and other devices for leaks. Running toilets, steady faucet drips, home water treatment units, and outdoor sprinkler systems are common sources of leaks.

Replace old toilets The major water use inside the home is toilet flushing. If your home was built before 1992 and you haven't replaced your toilets recently, you probably could benefit from installing high-efficiency toilets that use 1.6 gallons or less per flush. A family of four can save 14,000 to 25,000 gallons of water per year by making this change.

Replace old clothes washers Washers are the second largest water user in your home. If your clothes washer is old, you should consider purchasing a model with EPA's ENERGY STAR certification. ENERGY STAR washers use 35 to 50 percent less water and 50 percent less energy per load.

Plant the right plants Whether you're installing a new landscape or changing the existing one, select plants that are appropriate for your climate and use a suitable landscape and irrigation design. Consider using xeriscaping, a landscaping technique designed to create a visually attractive landscape by using low-water-use and drought-resistant grass, plants, shrubs, and trees. If maintained properly, a xeriscape can use less than one-half the water of a traditional landscape.

Provide only the water plants need Automatic landscape irrigation systems are a home's biggest water user. To make sure you're not overwatering, adjust your irrigation controller at least once a month to account for changes in the weather and install a rain shutoff device, soil moisture sensor, or humidity sensor to better control irrigation.