

Water Saving Tips

Conserving water conserves energy – electric, gas or both. It can also reduce your monthly water and sewer bills. Monitor your water bill for unusually high use. Your utility bill and water meter are tools that can help you discover leaks. For more information or questions regarding your utility bill or water meter, contact Waseca Utilities at 835-9718. The following suggestions may assist you in your water & energy conservation plans. For more water and energy saving tips, visit the following websites:

www.h2ouse.org, www.awwa.org, www.getwise.org, www.epa.gov, minnesota.earth911.org and www.wateruseitwisely.com.

Saving water inside the home:

- Know the location of your master water shut off valve, as well as the shut off valves for your sinks and toilets. This could save water and prevent damage to your home in the event of a major leak or break in your water service lines.
- Insulate hot water pipes for more immediate hot water at the faucet as well as savings in energy costs.
- Install water-saving aerators on all of your faucets.
- When washing your hands, don't let the water run while you lather.

Kitchen:

- When washing dishes by hand, don't let the water run while rinsing. Fill one sink with wash water and the other with rinse water.
- If your dishwasher is new, cut back on rinsing. Newer models clean more thoroughly than older ones.
- Use the garbage disposal sparingly. Compost vegetable food waste instead and save gallons of water every time.
- Keep a pitcher or bottle of water for drinking in the refrigerator instead of running the tap. This way, every drop goes down you and not the drain.
- Wash your fruits and vegetables in a pan of water instead of running water from the tap. You can then reuse it to water houseplants.
- Designate one glass for your drinking water each day or refill a water bottle. This will cut down on the number of glasses to wash.
- Do not use running water to thaw meat or other frozen foods. Defrost food overnight in the refrigerator or use the defrost setting on your microwave.

Bathroom:

- To save water and time, consider washing your face or brushing your teeth while in the shower.
- Turning off the water while brushing your teeth can save up to 25 gallons of water per month.
- Turning off the water while you shave can save up to 300 gallons of water per month.
- Shortening your shower by just a minute or two can save up to 150 gallons of water per month.
- Use a water-efficient showerhead. They are inexpensive, easy to install, and can save you up to 750 gallons of water per month.
- When running a bath, plug the tub before turning the water on, and then adjust the temperature as the tub fills.
- Listen for dripping faucets and running toilets. Fixing a leak can save up to 300 gallons of water a month or more.
- To determine whether you have a leaking toilet, put several drops of food coloring in your toilet tank water. If the colored water seeps down into the toilet bowl (without flushing), you have a leak. Fixing it can save up to 1,000 gallons of water per month.
- If your toilet was installed before 1992, reduce the amount of water used for each flush by inserting a displacement device in the tank, such as a plastic laundry soap bottle filled with water or sand to weight them down.

Laundry:

- Run your clothes washer and dishwasher only when they are full. Set the water level for the size of the load you are washing. You can save up to 1,000 gallons of water per month.
- When doing laundry, match the water level to the size of the load.
- Washing dark clothes in cold water saves on both water and energy while it helps your clothes to keep their colors.
- When shopping for a new clothes washer, look for an Energy Star rated model. Some of these can save up to 20 gallons per load, and save in energy costs as well. Check with your local utility company for rebates on Energy Star rated appliances.

Saving water outside the home:

- Collect water from your roof to water your garden or plants.
- Spreading a layer of organic mulch around plants retains moisture and saves water, time and money.
- Water your lawn and garden in the morning or evening when temperatures are cooler to minimize evaporation. Avoid watering on hot, windy days when much of the water will evaporate or blow away.
- Adjust sprinkler so only your lawn is watered and not the house, sidewalk or street.
- Set a kitchen timer when watering your lawn or garden to remind you when to stop. A running hose can discharge up to 10 gallons of water per minute.
- Rather than following a set watering schedule, check for soil moisture two to three inches below the surface before watering.
- Use drip irrigation for shrubs and trees to apply water directly to the roots where it is needed.
- When the kids want to cool off, use the sprinkler in an area where your lawn needs it most.
- Wash your pets outdoors on an area of your lawn that needs water.
- Wash your car on the lawn, and you'll water the lawn at the same time.
- Use a hose nozzle or turn off the water while you wash your car. You'll save up to 100 gallons of water every time.
- Use a broom instead of a hose to clean your driveway and sidewalk.
- Check outdoor faucets, sprinklers and hoses for leaks.
- Winterize outdoor spigots when temperatures dip below freezing to prevent pipes from leaking or bursting.
- Use a pool cover if you have a pool. This will reduce evaporation and help keep the water cleaner, reducing the need for chemicals.
- Keep the water level in your pool lower to minimize water loss due to splashing.
- Dispose of hazardous material properly. One quart of oil can contaminate 250,000 gallons of water, effectively eliminating that much water from our water supply. Contact your city or county for proper waste disposal options.

Information obtained from the following websites: www.wateruseitwisely.com, www.monolake.org, www.ci.redding.ca.us, and www.townofcary.org.