

DEPARTMENT OF UTILITIES THE CITY OF QUINCY



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Water Conservation Tips

You can play a role in conserving water and saving yourself money in the process by becoming conscious of the amount of water your household is using and by looking for ways to use less whenever you can.

Most people in North America use 50 to 70 gallons of water indoors each day. Indoors, 3/4 of all water is used in the bathroom. In the average home, the toilet accounts for 28% of water use.

Here are a few tips to help save water and reduce your utility bill:

INDOORS

In the bathroom:

- Check for hidden water leaks. Read the house water meter before and after a two-hour period when no water is being used. If the meter does not read exactly the same, there is a leak.
- Turn off the water while brushing your teeth, washing your face, shaving, and lathering in the shower. There is no need to keep the water running while brushing your teeth. Just wet your brush and fill a glass for mouth rinsing.
- Repair leaky faucets and toilets (one drop per second wastes 2,700 gallons of water per year). Check your toilets for leaks. Put a little food coloring in your toilet tank. If, without flushing, the color begins to appear in the bowl within 30 minutes, you have a leak that should be repaired immediately. Most replacement parts are inexpensive and easy to install. A small drip from a worn faucet washer can waste 20 gallons of water per day. Larger leaks can waste hundreds of gallons.
- Take a shorter shower. One way to cut down on water use is to turn off the shower after soaping up, then turn it back on to rinse. A four-minute shower uses approximately 20 to 40 gallons of water.

- Don't use the toilet as an ashtray or wastebasket. Every time you flush a cigarette butt, facial tissue or other small bit of trash, several gallons of water is wasted.
- Insulate your water pipes. It's easy and inexpensive to insulate your water pipes with pre-slit foam pipe insulation. You'll get hot water faster plus avoid wasting water while it heats up.
- Make sure you know where your master water shut-off valve is located. This could save gallons of water and damage to your home if a pipe were to burst.

In the kitchen:

- When washing dishes by hand, don't leave the water running for rinsing
- Thaw food in the refrigerator rather than using running water to thaw frozen items.
- Don't let the faucet run while you clean vegetables. Just rinse them in a stoppered sink or a pan of clean water.
- Use the dishwasher only for full loads and set the washing machine to the appropriate load size.

OUTDOORS

- Adjust sprinklers so only the lawn, rather than the house, street or driveway, is watered.
- Check for leaks in garden hoses. An average water hose sprays about 10 gallons per minute, but a pinhole-sized leak can waste as much as 170 gallons of water per day.