

Water Saving Tips From the Conservation Station

Kingsbridge M.U.D. Newsletter

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BlueLine



“Native and adapted plants require 80% less water as opposed to other plants.”

Smartscaping:

Texans are known for being loyal to their state, so why not extend that loyalty to your landscape? Native and adapted plants can tolerate even the harshest Texas weather meaning fewer replacements and less water consumed.

The typical household water bill shows an average of 40 to 60 percent allotted to irrigation. Once established, native and adapted plants require 80% less water as opposed to other plants. To help reduce the amount of water and money spent on your landscape; Consider converting to a Texas SmartScape yard.

Whether you're in the market for a major landscape overhaul or just a few quick fixes to save water this summer,

www.txsmartscape.com has the tools to help you succeed.

The searchable database lists SmartScape-approved plants by color, shape, amount of sunlight or water needed. The landscape design tool will ensure the native plants are placed in an aesthetic manner.

Waste not... Want Not:

“Common sense water use” is one of the best and most reliable methods for cutting back on water. The days of plentiful and cheap water are over and rising costs are on the horizon. We are at the point where we can no longer take valuable water resources for granted; It's time to develop a new outlook, being mindful of the water we use and ensuring it is used efficiently.

Making your home “Water Smart” can be done by implementing a few simple steps. First and foremost, you must make a commitment to conserve which saves us water and you, your money.

- Don't pour water down the drain when it could be used in other applications such as irrigating indoor plants
- Obtaining excess water and extending its usefulness can be done in a multitude of ways; be creative about it. For instance placing a plastic container on the shower floor to capture water that would just go down the drain. That alone would provide a great source of water for plant irrigation and/or household cleaning chores.
- All families use water a little differently; however the most



Leaks on average account for 10,000 gallons of wasted water in US homes every year.

recent statistics suggest that nearly 40 percent of the water we use at home gets flushed down the toilet; keep in mind that is just standard use. Leaky toilets, on the other hand, can make this percentage rise from 40 to almost 75.

A running toilet can leak up to a gallon of water per minute, which comes to an average of 1080 gallons a day multiplied by a 30 day month is 32,400 gallons of leaked water monthly! It is very important to check your toilet for leaks to ensure they are not running up your bill and wasting such a precious commodity.

- The biggest water waster is leaks. Slow running leaks and drips from leaky faucets, leaky toilets, and leaky outside spigots add up very quickly. Even a leak that drips just two tablespoons a minute equates

to 15 gallons a day. That is 105 gallons a week or 5,460 wasted gallons a year. Due to the fact that leaks hurt any and all water conservation efforts, they must be stopped.

Leak checking your own home is not nearly as hard as one might think. All you have to do is turn off all water coming to your home, then simply walk over to your meter and see if the meter is still registering water use. If it is, we have bad news... you have a leak.

However, knowledge is power now that you know steps can be taken to get those leaks repaired and get you right back on track to the Conservation Station.

Water Smart Bathroom:

If everyone in the US flushed the toilet just one less time per

day, enough water to fill an entire lake about a mile long, a mile wide, and four feet deep could be saved each day. It is estimated by some experts that about 50-75 percent of the water we use at home is used in the bathroom. Due to the overwhelming amount of water used in the bathroom this room should be the prime location for cutting back and being mindful of water usage. Maximizing your water efficiency in the bathroom can be achieved by implementing a few easy steps.

- Check all your toilets for leaks. Very often these are silent leaks you don't realize exist until they have wasted hundreds of gallons of water.

- Since 1992, new toilets installed in Texas can only use up to 1.6 gallons per flush. Replacing older toilets will yield significant savings.

- It seems like a simple thing, but don't use the toilet as a trash can. Every gallon counts.

- Take a shower instead of a bath, and when taking a shower ensure that it's short. Every gallon counts. Shortening a 10 minute shower to five minutes can save 25 gallons of water.

- Don't run the water while brushing teeth or shaving, just turn on enough water to rinse the toothbrush and sink.

Water Smart Kitchen:

The kitchen is usually a high traffic area for heavy water use. Here are a few simple tricks to eliminate wasted water.

- Put the stopper in the sink. If you don't have one, fill a pot or bowl when cleaning fruits and vegetables, washing pots, pans,

and cooking utensils. Then, when emptying the water, run the disposal for a "two-fer."

- If your family drinks a lot of water, try keeping bottles of water in the refrigerator. This eliminates the wasteful habit of running tap water until it gets cold enough to drink, and can save between 200-300 gallons a month.

- When purchasing new appliances, check the water requirements of various models and brands... some use less than others.

- Only run the dishwasher with a full load to save water, energy, detergent and money. Check the owner's manual...you may not need to fully wash off the dishes you're loading - scraping them off will work just as well.

- Use less water for cooking. This not only saves water but the food is more nutritious when the minerals are not boiled out and poured down the sink.

- Use the disposal sparingly, too. It takes a lot of running water to operate. Consider starting a compost pile that can help your garden thrive, too.

- Do you know which method of washing dishes is more water efficient... by hand or in the dishwasher? Compare how many gallons of water your sink would hold to the 9.5 to 12 gallons a dishwasher typically uses for a regular cycle.

- Don't defrost frozen food with running water. Plan ahead to defrost it in the refrigerator overnight, or in the microwave. Doing this regularly can save

Water Conservation:

In the next 30-50 years there will be a rise in population in Houston and its surrounding areas bringing the total to 11 million people. We look at the projected population growth against our potable water supply. While the population continues to rise, our water supply does not. An increase in conservation is severely needed. There are many ways to conserve that are easy and ultimately cost effective.

Communities across the country are starting to face challenges in maintaining healthy and affordable water supplies; that's why it's more important than ever to use our water wisely and not waste it.

anywhere from 50 to 150 gallons of water each month.

- Install aerators or spray taps. An aerator mixes air with water, which not only cuts the flow, but also reduces splashing. A spray tap is similar, but can move from side to side like a small shower head, to put the stream of water exactly where it is needed.

- Before you reach to turn on the kitchen faucet, ask yourself, "It is worth the use?"

- Fix that leaking faucet! A dripping faucet wastes more water in a single day than one person needs for drinking during an entire week!

The Facts on Leaks:

- Leaks on average account for 10,000 gallons of water wasted in the home every year, which can fill an entire back yard swimming pool.

- Leaks around the United States homes could exceed more than 1 trillion gallons per year. That amount of water is equivalent to the annual water use of Los Angeles, Chicago, and Miami combined.

- Around the United States, ten percent of homes have leaks that waste up to 90 gallons a day or more.

- The majority of leaks can be fixed by simply retrofitting a household with new WaterSense-labeled¹ appliances.

¹WaterSense Labels: Labels that identify a water-efficient product that has been independently tested and certified to meet EPA WaterSense criteria for efficiency and performance.

Leak Detection Methods:

- One of the easiest methods to detect a leak is a family of four on average uses about 12,000 gallons per month during the winter. If your household exceeds this usage, you likely have a leak.

- One of the most reliable methods to check for a leak is to check your water meter before a period of no water use. A general rule of thumb is a 1-2 hour period, after that 1-2 hour period; If your meter does not read EXACTLY the same as it did beforehand, you definitely have a leak.

- Checking for toilet leaks is one of the most important things to do. Obviously if you hear water running or see the water rippling you have a leak of some kind. However, some leaks are slower and do not provide such visual queues. Place a drop of food coloring in the tank and, wait 15 minutes without flushing. If food coloring shows up in the bowl, you have a leak.





Average Daily Household Water Use

A typical household uses approximately 260 gallons of water every day. We can reduce this amount by using these ten simple steps to water conservation.

- 1. Install low-flow showerheads, taps, faucets, and toilets**

Older faucets use between 3 and 7 gallons per minute (GPM), while low-flow aerators reduce water flow to 1.5 GPM. Likewise, a low-flow toilet can reduce water consumption per flush by approximately 30%. High efficiency toilets can save an average household 2500 gallons a year per toilet.
- 2. Turn off the faucet**

while brushing your teeth, shaving, washing your hands, or rinsing dishes or vegetables. Each minute you have the faucet off saves at least 3 gallons. In the shower, get wet, turn off the water to lather, and then turn the water back on to rinse. To make this an easy step, some low-flow showerheads have levers to temporarily stop the flow of water.
- 3. Fix dripping taps and leaking toilets**

by replacing washers and worn parts. A faucet drip or invisible leak in the toilet will waste up to 5,475 gallons a year. To check for toilet leaks, add 10 drops of food coloring to the tank. Wait 15 minutes. If the color appears in the bowl, you have a leak.
- 4. Place Plastic jugs filled with sand or stones in your toilet tank**

to reduce the amount of water it uses per flush. Don't use bricks, which can flake off inside the tank and interfere with the toilets operation.
- 5. Wash only full loads**

in both the dishwasher and washing machine, or set the water levels to accommodate smaller loads.
- 6. Use mulch and shade netting to reduce evaporation in your garden**

Mulch helps the soil stay moist, and as an added benefit, reduces weeds, which are water gluttons. Water only when plants wilt or when it's difficult to push a screwdriver into the soil.

7. Use biodegradable (phosphate-free) detergents and soaps and re-use dishwater in the garden. If you want to make an even greater impact, consider plumbing your house to a gray-water system that collects water from your sinks, washing machine, baths, and showers for irrigating (check your local water regulations first).

8. Xeriscape Is much like natural landscaping, however instead of looking for plants that are native to your region, you are also looking for plants that have the ability to thrive on little to no supplemental irrigation throughout the year.

9. Plant densely in your garden The denser the vegetation, the more water can be stored. Decreasing the amount of water that gets evaporated, turns a higher percentage of water into productive water decreasing the amount of supplemental irrigation needed.

10. Irrigation system Have your system inspected to ensure it is operating correctly, identify any problems and set it to run more efficiently. If you are interested in an irrigation system audit most landscaping companies can assist you.

A Little Goes a Long Way

The potable water supply on this Earth is finite. With that being said, we have many tools we can use to extend and replenish the life of our water supply. It is our responsibility just as much as the next generation's to do everything we can to conserve; not just for yourself, but for your children as well.

We at Kingsbridge MUD are simply requesting you be mindful of the water you are using and where it is going, for that alone could save countless gallons across the district.

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MXVRRKUELRRLYS
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CONSERVATION	SMARTSCAPING	WATERSENSE
IRRIGATION	WASTE	XERISCAPE



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