

# ATTACHMENT A

## Water Saving Methods That Can Be Practiced by the Individual Water User

In-home water use accounts for an average of 65 percent of total residential use, while the remaining 35 percent is used for exterior residential purposes such as lawn watering and car washing. Average residential in-home water use data indicates that about 40 percent is used for toilet flushing, 35 percent for bathing, 11 percent for kitchen use, and 14 percent for clothes washing. Water saving methods that can be practiced by the individual water user are listed below.

### A. Bathroom

- Take a shower instead of filling the tub and taking a bath. Showers usually use less water than tub baths.
- Install a low flow head which restricts the quantity of flow at 80 psi to no more than 2.75 gallons per minute.
- Take short showers and install a cutoff valve or turn the water off while soaping and back on again only to rinse.
- Do not use hot water when cold will do. Water and energy can be saved by washing hands with soap and cold water; hot water should only be added when hands are especially dirty.
- Reduce the level of the water being used in a bath tub by one or two inches if a shower is not available.
- Turn water off when brushing teeth until it is time to rinse.
- Do not let water run when washing hands. Instead, hands should be wet and water should be turned off while soaping and scrubbing and then turned on again to rinse. A cutoff valve may also be installed in the faucet.
- Shampoo hair in the shower. Shampooing in the shower takes only a little more water than is used to shampoo hair during a bath, and much less than shampooing and bathing separately.
- Hold hot water in the basin when shaving instead of letting the faucet continue to run.
- Test toilets for leaks. To test for a leak, a few drops of food coloring can be added to the water in the tank. The toilet should not be flushed. The customer can then watch to see if the coloring appears in the bowl within a few minutes. If it does, the fixture needs adjustment or repair.
- Use a toilet tank displacement device. A plastic milk bottle can be filled with stones or with water, recapped and placed in the toilet tank. This will reduce the amount of water in the tank but still provide enough for flushing. (Bricks which some people use for this purpose are not recommended since they eventually crumble and could damage the working mechanism, necessitating a call to the plumber.)
- Install faucet aerators to reduce water consumption.
- Never use the toilet to dispose of cleaning tissues, cigarette butts, or other trash. This can waste a great deal of water and also place an unnecessary load on the sewage treatment plant or septic tank.
- When building a new home or remodeling a bathroom, install a new low-volume flush toilet that uses 2.0 gallons or less per flush.

**B. Kitchen**

- Use a pan of water (or place a stopper in the sink) for rinsing pots, pans and cooking implements when cooking, rather than turning on the water faucet each time a rinse is needed.
- Never run the dishwasher without a full load. In addition to saving water, expensive detergent will last longer and a significant energy saving will appear in the utility bill.
- Use the sink disposal sparingly and never use it for just a few scraps.
- Keep a container of drinking water in the refrigerator. Running water from the tap until cool is wasteful. Better still, both water and energy can be saved by keeping cold water in a picnic jug on a kitchen counter to avoid opening the refrigerator door frequently.
- Use a small pan of cold water when cleaning vegetables, rather than letting the faucet run.
- Use only a little water in the pot and put a lid on it for cooking most food. Not only does this method save water, but food is more nutritious since vitamins and minerals are not poured down the drain with the extra cooking water.
- Use a pan of water for rinsing when hand washing dishes, rather than a running faucet.
- Always keep water conservation in mind, and think of other ways to save in the kitchen. Small kitchen savings from not making too much coffee or not letting ice cubes melt in a sink can add up in a year's time.

**C. Laundry**

- Wash only a full load when using an automatic washing machine (32 to 59 gallons are required per load).
- Use the lowest water level setting on the washing machine for light loads, whenever possible.
- Use cold water as often as possible to save energy and to conserve the hot water for uses which cold water cannot serve. (This is also better for clothing made of today's synthetic fabrics).

**D. Appliances and Plumbing**

- Check water requirements of various models and brands when considering purchasing any new appliances that use water. Some use less water than others.
- Check all water line connections and faucets for leaks. If the cost of water is \$1.00 per 1,000 gallons, one could be paying a large bill for water that simply goes down the drain because of leakage. A slow drip can waste as much as 170 gallons of water each day, or 5,000 gallons per month, and can add as much as \$5.00 per month to the water bill.
- Learn to replace faucet washers so that drips can be corrected promptly. It is easy to do, costs very little, and can represent substantial savings on plumbing and water bills.
- Check for water leakage, such as a leak between the water meter and the house. To check, all indoor and outdoor faucets should be turned off, and the water meter should be checked. If it continues to run or turn, a leak probably exists and needs to be located.
- Insulate all hot water pipes to avoid the delays and wasted water experienced while waiting for the water to "run hot".

- Be sure the hot water heater thermostat is not set too high. Extremely hot settings waste water and energy since the water often has to be cooled with cold water before it can be used.
- Use a moisture meter to determine when house plants need water. More plants die from over watering than from being too dry.

#### **E. Outdoor Uses**

- During the hotter summer months, water lawns early in the morning. Much of the water used on the lawn can simply evaporate between the sprinkler and the grass.
- Use a sprinkler that produces large drops of water, rather than a fine mist, to avoid evaporation.
- To avoid evaporation, turn soaker hoses so the holes are on the bottom.
- Water slowly for better absorption and never water on windy days.
- Forget about watering the street, sidewalks or driveways. They will never grow a thing.
- Condition the soil with compost before planting grass or flower beds so that water will soak in rather than run off.
- Fertilize lawns at least twice a year for root stimulation. Grass with a good root system makes better use of water.
- Learn to know when grass needs watering. If it has turned a dull gray-green or if footprints remain visible, it is time to water.
- Do not water too frequently. Too much water can overload the soil so that air cannot get to the roots and can encourage plant diseases.
- Do not over water. Soil can absorb only so much moisture and the rest simply runs off. A timer will help, and either a kitchen timer or an alarm clock will do. An inch and one-half of water, applied once a week, will keep most Texas grasses alive and healthy.
- Operate automatic sprinkler systems only when the demand on the town's water supply is lowest. Set the system to operate between 4:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m.
- Do not scalp lawns when mowing during hot weather. Taller grass holds moisture better. Grass should be cut fairly often so that only 1/2 to 3/4 inch is trimmed off. A better looking lawn will result.
- Use a watering can or hand water with the hose in small areas of the lawn that need more frequent watering (those near walks or driveways or in especially hot, sunny spots).
- Learn what types of grass, shrubbery, and plants do best in the area and in which parts of the lawn; and then plant accordingly. If one has a heavily shaded yard, no amount of water will make roses bloom. In especially dry sections of the state, attractive arrangements of plants that are adapted to arid or semi-arid climates should be chosen.
- Consider decorating areas of the lawn with rocks, gravel, wood chips, or other materials now available that require no water at all.
- Do not sweep walks or driveways with the hose. Use a broom or rake instead.
- Use a bucket of soapy water when washing the car and the hose only for rinsing.