

# Simple Steps to Save Water

Hello and welcome to the first of several newsletters with basic information that over the course of the next few newsletters I will try to provide you with some simple steps to help save water which means that you could lower your water bill. As you read on, I hope that you will find some helpful information.

Saving water around the home is simple and smart. The average household spends as much as \$500 per billing period on its water and sewer bill but could save about \$170 per year by retrofitting with water efficient fixtures and incorporating water-saving practices. Of course there could be hidden or other leaks in the home that go unnoticed, which will directly affect the water bill. Please remember that any undetected leaks will have adverse effects to the sewer bill as well.

How much money you save will depend on the cost of water where you live, but it makes sense that using less water lowers your utility bill. More importantly, using less water preserves this limited resource for generations to come.

## Inside the Home



Your toilet may be quiet as a mouse, but are you sure it isn't leaking?

Water leaks account for approximately 14% of all water use in the average American home, and the toilet is one of the most likely places to find them.

Sometimes it is easy to tell that your toilet is leaking - you hear the sound of running water or a faint hissing or trickling. But many times, water flows through the tank silently, which is why these leaks are often overlooked.

### Get Flush With Savings

- Consider installing a WaterSense labeled toilet, which uses 20 percent less water while offering equal or superior performance. Compared to older, inefficient models, WaterSense labeled toilets could save a family of four more than \$90 annually on its water utility bill, and \$2,000 over the lifetime of the toilets.
- Check for toilet leaks by adding food coloring to the tank. If the toilet is leaking, color will appear in the bowl within 15 minutes. (Make sure to flush as soon as the test is done, since food coloring can stain the tank.)

## Accessorize Your Faucet

- Installing a WaterSense labeled aerator is one of the most cost-effective ways to save water. Also consider replacing the entire faucet with a WaterSense labeled model. Either way, you can increase the faucet's efficiency by 30 percent without sacrificing performance.
- Repair dripping faucets and showerheads. A drip rate of one drip per second can waste more than 3,000 gallons per year.

## Clean Up With Savings

- A full bathtub can require up to 70 gallons of water, while taking a 5-minute shower uses only 10 to 25 gallons.
- Turning off the tap while you brush your teeth can save 8 gallons per day.

## Lighten Your Loads

- Wash only full loads of dishes and clothes or lower the water settings for smaller loads.
- Replace your old washing machine with a high-efficiency, ENERGY STAR® labeled model, which uses up to 50 percent less water and electricity.

More information at: [http://www3.epa.gov/watersense/pubs/simple\\_steps.html](http://www3.epa.gov/watersense/pubs/simple_steps.html)

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## DAILY WATER CONSUMPTION AMOUNTS

The figures below are the average daily amounts of consumption in the United States for common uses. Data is from the Environmental Protection Agency. Older homes with older toilets and sinks will use more than what I have listed below.

ACTIVITY	AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD	HOUSEHOLD USING CONSERVATION METHODS
Bath	36 Gallons	15 Gallons
Brushing Teeth	Tap Running = 2 Gallons/Min.	1 Gallon/Min.
Dishwashing	15 Gallons	Short Cycle = 7 Gallons
Hand Washing	Tap Running = 2 Gallons	½ Gallons
Shaving	Tap Running = 20 Gallons	Using Bowl = 1 Gallon
Shower (5 min.)	Tap Running = 5 Gallons/Min.	Tap Running = 2 Gallons/Min.
Toilet Flush	3-7 Gallons	Low Flush Toilet = 2 Gallons (Low Flow .6 and 1.6 Gallons)
Washing Dishes by Hand	Tap Running = 8-27 Gallons	1.5-2 Gallons
Washing Machine	Top Loading = 40 Gallons	25 Gallons
Watering Lawn	12 Gallons/Min. per Zone	**

More information at: <http://water.usgs.gov/edu/qa-home-percapita.html>

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