



Tips on Conserving Water

The average household uses about 650 gallons of water per day. About half of that water is used in the home. We're fortunate to have good quality water in Galveston, but drought periods remind us that water is not limitless. We have many opportunities to save water throughout the house. Most of these are as simple as fixing a leak or making a small change in our habits. In addition to saving water, some of these tips will also help you save both energy and money.

IN YOUR BATHROOM:

The toilet is the highest water-consuming device in the home, making up about 27% of indoor water use. Depending on the type of toilet you have, modifying the amount of water it flushes or replacing it with an ultra-low flush toilet could save you lots of water and money on your water bill.

- Toilets over 15 years old use 3.5 to 5 gallons of water per flush. Some older toilet models even use as much as 7 gallons per flush! You can easily reduce the amount of water used per flush by displacing some of the water in the toilet's tank. Simply place a water-resistant object, such as a plastic bottle, inside the tank. Each gallon you can displace represents thousands of gallons you will save each year. Modifying your toilet in such a manner should not adversely impact its operation, however, if it does, consider replacing it with a newer model.



- Install an Ultra-Low Flush Toilet. Residential-type toilets installed in the U.S. in the last 15 years should use no more than 1.6 gallons per flush. If you have an old-style toilet, replace it with a newer model and save. *This saves about 2 to 5 gallons per flush compared to an older toilet.*
- Turn off the water when brushing your teeth. Wet your brush then turn off the water while brushing. Rinse briefly when finished. You'll save over 9 gallons of water each time you brush. ***Leaving the water running can use 10 gallons of water each time you brush.***



- Showers and baths consume about 18% of the water used indoors. You can save water in the shower by keeping each shower short and sweet, and running the water only when it is needed to lather up and rinse off.
- Install Low-Flow Showerheads. If your home was built before 1992, chances are your showerhead puts out about 5 gallons of water per minute (gpm). Multiply this by the number of minutes you're in the shower, and the water adds up fast! $5 \text{ gpm} \times 10 \text{ min} = 50 \text{ gallons}$ Most showerheads installed after 1992 deliver no more than 2.5 gallons of water per minute. Some even emit less and still provide a great shower! $2.5 \text{ gpm} \times 10 \text{ min} = 25 \text{ gallons}$



IN YOUR KITCHEN:

- Wash a full load of dishes. You use the same amount of water for a full dishwasher as a half full dishwasher. ***A standard dishwasher uses about 15 gallons per wash.***





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- Many dishwashers have shorter cycles that get your dishes clean but use less water and less energy. **These cycles can save up to 30% of your water use.**
- Use a dishpan or a stopper in your sink. Dishwashing by hand or rinsing vegetables and fruit with the tap running can use up to 30 gallons. *Using a dishpan instead of running the water can save 25 gallons.*
- Keep a pitcher of drinking water in your refrigerator. This will save water you might otherwise waste when you let the faucet run until the water is cool. **Running your faucet can use 3 to 7 gallons per minute.**



IN YOUR LAUNDRY ROOM:

Washing your clothes is a necessity. However, keep in mind that washing machines use about 22% of all water in your home! In order to maximize the efficiency of your laundry, only do full loads.

Washing machines have come a long way in the past few years. Newer models are more energy and water-efficient than ever and require less detergent per load (also reducing the potential amount of chemicals entering the wastewater system).



SAVE WATER ALL AROUND YOUR HOME:

- Fix dripping or leaking faucets immediately. Often the fix is as simple as a new washer. **A faucet that drips 1 time each second will waste almost 9 gallons per day (over 3000 gallons per year).**
- Clean your sidewalks, driveways and patios with a broom instead of a hose.
- Faucet aerators can be attached to most existing faucets, and use 1.5 gallons per minute. **Aerators can save 1 to 5 gallons per minute compared with older faucets.**
- Clean your car at a commercial car wash that recycles its water. If you do clean your car at home, wash the car over your lawn instead of the driveway. This not only re-uses the water, but also prevents dirty water from running off into the storm drains and into our bay.
- Water is used in various ways from home-to-home other than for drinking, cleaning or washing, such as decorative fountains, water softeners, household plants, and fish tanks. For water that is reused, buy only recirculating water features, not ones with "pass-through" water use.

How to detect a leak

First, make sure all water-using devices in your home are TURNED OFF. Next, find the water meter in your yard. **CAREFULLY** remove the lid and locate the meter dial. Check to see if the dial is moving. If it is, you either have a leak or something in your home is using water. Go find it! Places to look are toilets (flappers get old and wear out, letting the toilet leak), faucets and under sinks. If you can't find the leak, you should call a professional. The leak could be in an inaccessible spot, and may be worse than you thought!

