



Sustainable Pickering

Water Saving Tips

Collect Rain Water for Garden Use

- ✓ When it rains, collect the rain water runoff from your evestroughs in a rain barrel. You can use this recycled rain water later if you want to work in your garden or wash your car. This way, you lower your water consumption and your water bill.

Water Your Yard When It's Dark

- ✓ When you water your garden or lawn during the daylight hours, a lot of water gets wasted because of evaporation. If you leave your sprinkler on for a few minutes in the early morning, evening, or at night, you will need significantly less water to get the job done.

Showers

- ✓ Reduce your shower time. If you shorten your shower time from 10 minutes to 5 minutes or less while using a 9.5 litre per minute (lpm) showerhead, you can save up to 40 litres of water each time you shower. You can also save water by turning off the water while lathering in the shower.
- ✓ Replace your showerhead. Older models use 18 to 30 lpm while water-efficient models use 9.5 lpm or less. Ultra-high efficiency showerheads use as low as 5.6 lpm. A family of four could save up to 160,000 litres of water in one year with a 9.5 lpm showerhead, and even more with a 5.6 lpm showerhead. Reducing your water in the shower will also save you money on your water and energy bills.

Toilets

- ✓ Reduce the number of times you flush your toilet with multiple uses before flushing.
- ✓ Replace your old toilet with a low flow 6 litres per flush (lpf) model, a high efficiency 4.8 lpf model, or a dual 3/6 lpf model. Older models can use as much as 13 to 26 litres of water per flush. A family of four can save up to 80,000 litres of water a year with a 6L toilet, and even more with a high efficiency model. That's a 20% reduction in household consumption.



If you are unable to replace your water guzzling toilet, retrofit your toilet with toilet displacement devices.

- ✓ Do not place plastic bottles or bricks in a toilet tank. This can interrupt the flushing mechanisms or flow of the water in the toilet, possibly causing it to leak. Also, older toilets were not designed to function with lower volumes of water.
- ✓ Do not use the toilet as a garbage can. Tissues and other items are often flushed away instead of going into appropriate disposal containers. Unnecessary flushing of the toilet even once a day can waste up to 1,000 litres of water per year.

Faucets

- ✓ Do not let the water run while brushing your teeth, washing your face or shaving. Instead, turn off the faucet when not directly using water flow.
- ✓ Retrofit all household faucets with water saving aerators or consider replacing with water efficient models. Aerators are inexpensive items that can be found at most hardware stores. Look for ultra low flow 1.9 lpm or 0.5 gallon per minute devices.
- ✓ Insulate water pipes to reduce hot water delivery delay (and wasted water) experienced while waiting for water to run hot from the faucets.

Dishwashing

- ✓ Scrape dishes instead of rinsing them under running water before loading your dishwasher. For heavy cleaning of grills or oven parts pre-soak them overnight.
- ✓ Compost your kitchen waste (organic matter) instead of using a sink garbage disposal system. Sink garbage disposal systems consume hundreds of litres of water each week to send matter down the drain, and increases the load for the water treatment facilities.



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- ✓ When washing dishes by hand, do not wash or rinse with running water. Use tubs or plug the sink.
- ✓ Capture excess water in a container while running the tap. This water can be used for your plants or pets.
- ✓ Dishwashers use large volumes of water, about 60 litres of water per load. Operate automatic dishwashers at full capacity and/or set the water level for the size of your load.
- ✓ If you are considering the purchase of a new dishwasher, look for one that is water and energy efficient.

Leaks

- ✓ Checking for leaks in taps, pipes and dishwasher hoses is an easy way to reduce water wastage. Remember, one leaking tap can waste more than 2,000 litres a month.
- ✓ To check your home for leaks, turn off every tap and appliance that uses water, and then read your water meter. Wait a while (overnight if you can), and read again. If the meter has ticked over, something's leaking. Check your toilets and taps first.
- ✓ When shopping for a new clothes washer, replace the more common, less efficient, top loading clothes washer with a high efficiency, front loading washer which uses about 30 percent less water and 40 to 50 percent less energy.
- ✓ Never pour water down the drain when there may be another use for it such as watering a plant or garden, or for cleaning.

Outdoor Tips

- ✓ Use mulch around shrubs and garden plants to reduce evaporation from the soil surface and cut down on weed growth.



- ✓ Direct downspouts or gutters toward shrubbery or trees, and / or collect rainwater in a large bucket for other outside uses.
- ✓ Avoid over fertilizing your lawn. Fertilizer applications increase the need for water. Apply fertilizers which contain slow-release, water-insoluble forms of nitrogen.
- ✓ Plant native and / or drought-tolerant grasses, ground covers, shrubs and trees. Once established, they do not need water as frequently and usually will survive a dry period without watering. Group plants together based on similar water needs.
- ✓ Use a shut-off nozzle on your hose which can be adjusted down to a fine spray so that water flows only as needed. When finished, turn it off at the faucet instead of at the nozzle to avoid leaks. Check hose connectors to make sure plastic or rubber washers are in place. Washers prevent leaks.
- ✓ Do not leave sprinklers or hoses unattended. A garden hose can pour out 600 gallons or more in only a few hours. Use a kitchen timer to remind yourself to turn sprinklers off.
- ✓ Avoid purchasing recreational water toys which require a constant stream of water.
- ✓ Use a broom, not a hose, to clean driveways, steps and sidewalks.
- ✓ Wash the car with water from a bucket. If a hose is used, control the flow with an automatic shut off nozzle.
- ✓ Adjust the lawn mower to a higher setting to provide natural ground shade and to promote water retention by the soil.
- ✓ Water your garden during the coolest part of the day. Do not water on windy days.
- ✓ Water plus wind equals waste! If you water when it's windy, you will find the water going everywhere except where you want it to go. Wind also causes water to evaporate quickly.
- ✓ Cover outdoor pools to reduce evaporation.