

# Water Conservation

Water is a precious resource with a limited supply. As the population grows, our community must conserve water to the fullest extent possible.

## Drought Information

Due to the dry winter and hot summer weather, the City of Menlo Park, Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency (BAWSCA) and the SFPUC have asked the public to reduce water use by 10%. While mandatory cutbacks once feared necessary will likely not be required this year, SFPUC officials caution that failing to continue conserving may make rationing necessary next year if dry conditions continue.

## How to Conserve Water at Home:

**OUTDOORS:** Landscaping accounts for approximately 50% of water used by Californians at home. The majority of wasted water is due to over watering.

### Adjust your irrigation systems:

- Turn watering time **down**.
- Turn system **off** completely on cool or wet days.
- Water during early morning, late evening times or at night.

### Plant shrubs and flowers that take little or no water:

- Request a copy of the **new** water-wise landscaping CD-ROM (see information below).
- Reduce the size your lawn when installing new landscaping.
- Consider planting California native drought tolerant plants.

**Water only what your plants need:** Water your lawn once a week and only at night.

**Use a broom to clean sidewalks, driveways, and pavement instead of a hose.**

**Wash your car sparingly and when you do wash it, take it to an automated car wash.** These facilities often use less water than washing at home and the runoff is filtered, treated and reused. If you must wash at home, use a spray nozzle that shuts off when not in use.

**Fix Water Leaks Outside:** Many silent leaks send water and money down the drain. Check for leaky irrigation systems. If you have an older irrigation system, over 50% of the outside water used can be lost to leaks. To check for hidden or unseen leaks, turn off all water taps inside and outside your home. If your water meter dial is moving, you may have a hidden leak.

## INDOORS:

**Fix Water Leaks Inside Your Home:** Studies have shown that leaking water in homes can waste more than 10% of the water used indoors. Check for leaky faucets and toilets. For example, a faucet leaking a slow steady drip – 100 drops per minute – wastes 350 gallons per month. A faucet leaking a small stream wastes 2,000 to 2,700 gallons of water per month. Replacing worn washers in your faucets will usually stop leaks.

### **In the Bathroom:**

- Replace older, inefficient toilets, shower heads and faucets with newer models that use less water:
  - Toilets are the largest water users in your home. Unsure of the efficiency of your toilet? Lift the tank lid and check the inside back of the toilet tank for the manufacturer's date. Any date before 1994 does not meet the current Federal standard of 1.6 gallons per flush and should be replaced.
- Install a modern efficient showerhead and/or take shorter showers. Each minute you cut saves 2.5 gallons.
- Install a faucet aerator on your sink and turn off the tap when brushing teeth and shaving.

### **In the Laundry Room:**

- Replace older inefficient clothes washers with new efficient models:
  - The clothes washer is the second largest water user in your home.
  - A typical clothes washer has a water factor rating of 12 to 13. Water efficient clothes washers have water factor ratings of 9.5 or less. Super efficient machines have ratings lower than 5.
    - § The water factor is measured by the quantity of water (gallons) used to wash each cubic foot of laundry. For example: a washer that uses 45 gallons of water with a 3 cubic foot capacity of laundry will have a water factor rating of 15 ( $45 \div 3 = 15$ ); while a washer that uses 24 gallons of water to wash the same amount of laundry will have a water factor rating of 8 ( $24 \div 3 = 8$ ). The lower the water factor rating, the more water efficient the clothes washer. A clothes washer with a water factor rating of 6 uses half the amount of water compared to a washer with a rating of 12, to clean the same amount of clothes.
  - Get a rebate for the purchase of your new efficient clothes washer!
  - A rebate of \$125 or \$200 is available for qualifying machines. Please visit <http://waterenergysavings.com/> for information on qualifying appliances and specific rebate amounts. For specific questions or to verify funding availability, call PG&E's Smarter Energy Line at (800) 933-9555.
- Run full loads only:
  - Operate your clothes and dishwashers with full loads only, even if the machine has an adjustable load setting. Also choose a water saving setting on your washer if that is an option.

## In the Kitchen:

- Replace older, inefficient dish washers with new efficient models.
- Choose a water saving setting on your dishwasher.
- Install faucet aerators in your kitchen. Best estimates show that a typical four-person household can save more than 1,700 gallons of water per year by installing low-flow faucet aerators in both the kitchen and bathroom. Of these savings, 1,300 gallons could be from reductions in hot water use. This would help save electricity and money. Menlo Park Municipal Water District customers can obtain a water-conserving bathroom and/or kitchen aerator for FREE by calling 330-6740 or by emailing [rmwheeler@menlopark.org](mailto:rmwheeler@menlopark.org).

## Free Water Wise Gardening in the Bay Area CD.

**Now available!** This new CD-ROM is tailored especially for the Bay Area. The program displays outstanding water efficient garden photographs hot-linked to the plants that compose them. The program offers a searchable plant database, watering recommendations, a searchable gardening guide, and allows the user to prepare reports and shopping lists for their use. This user friendly program brings tools to the homeowner that will enable them to incorporate beautiful water efficient plants and gardening techniques into their gardens.



For a virtual tour of the software, click here [http://www.bawsca.org/tour\\_of\\_software.pdf](http://www.bawsca.org/tour_of_software.pdf)

To request a copy of the CD, please contact the Menlo Park Municipal Water District at 330-6740 or email [rmwheeler@menlopark.org](mailto:rmwheeler@menlopark.org). Be certain to provide your mailing address. Only one CD per Menlo Park Municipal Water District household.