

WATER CONSERVATION SAVE WATER OUTSIDE YOUR HOME

Private Plumbing System

- Check water requirements of various models and brands when considering purchasing any new appliances. Some use significantly less water than others.
- Check all water line connections and faucets for leaks. A slow drip can waste as much as 170 gallons of water each day (5,000 gallons per month) and will add cost to your water bill.
- Learn to repair faucets so that drips can be corrected promptly. It is easy to do, costs very little, and can mean a substantial savings in plumbing and water bills.
- Check for hidden water leakage such as a leak between the water meter and the house. To check, turn off all indoor and outdoor faucets and water-using appliances. Follow “Step 4: Check for Leaks” contained on the information sheet entitled “HOW TO READ YOUR WATER METER”. Repair all leaks on your private plumbing system immediately.
- Insulate all hot water pipes to reduce the delays (and wasted water) experienced while waiting for the water to run hot.
- Be sure the water heater thermostat is not set too high. Extremely hot settings waste water and energy because the water often has to be cooled with cold water before it can be used. Setting the thermostat too high can also be dangerous, as water too hot can result in scalding or burns.
- Use a moisture meter to determine when house plants need water. More plants die from overwatering than from needing water.

Lawn and Garden

- Water yards only when needed. Look at the grass, feel the soil, or use a soil moisture meter to determine when to water.
- Do not over-water. Soil can absorb only so much moisture and the rest simply runs off. A timer will help - either a kitchen timer or an alarm clock will do. One inch (1”) of water (about the height of a can of tuna fish) applied once a week in the summer will keep most Texas grasses alive and healthy.
- Water lawns early in the morning during the hotter summer months. Otherwise, much of the water used on the lawn can simply evaporate between the sprinkler heads and the grass.
- To avoid excessive evaporation, use a sprinkler head that produces large drops of water, rather than a fine mist. Sprinkler heads that send droplets out on a low angle also help control evaporation.
- Set automatic sprinkler systems to provide thorough, but infrequent watering. Pressure-regulating devices should be set to design specifications. Rain shutoff devices can prevent watering in the rain.
- Use drip irrigation systems for bedded plants, trees, or shrubs, or turn soaker hoses upside-down so the holes are on the bottom. This will help avoid evaporation also.
- Forget about watering the streets, sidewalks, walkways, driveways, etc. They will never grow a thing. Use a broom to sweep all streets, sidewalks, walkways, driveways, etc. rather than washing with water.
- Vehicle washing should be done with a handheld bucket or a handheld garden hose equipped with a positive shutoff nozzle for quick rinses. Do not allow garden hoses to run continuously.