
Putnam Valley Central School District

Fact Sheet #3

Water Conservation Measures

WATER-WISE AND CONSERVE WATER

Water is our most precious natural resource, without it life ceases. Yet, judging by our water use and consumption practices, many of us take it for granted. It has been reported by the USEPA that a typical household uses approximately 260 gallons of water per day. According to the U.S. Geological Survey¹, of the 26 billion gallons of water consumed daily in the United States, approximately 7.8 billion gallons, or 30 percent², is devoted to outdoor uses. The majority of this, reportedly, was used for landscaping.

Utilizing lots of water for our household uses, increases the amount of wastewater being discharged to our wastewater treatment plants and/or on-site septic treatment systems.

Observing the following few simple guidelines in the garden, kitchen, bathroom and laundry room will help conserve this precious commodity.

WATER-WISE LANDSCAPING

- Water less so that grass roots go deeper into the soil and weeds growing in the top few inches of soil dry out and die³. Too much water promotes weak growth and increases mowing requirements
- Mow your lawn less frequently. This lowers the rate of evaporation
- Limit planting to native and low-water-use plants
- Use of mulches aid in greater water retention, moderating soil temperatures and preventing sediment erosion
- Do all your watering early in the morning or late in the evening to prevent evaporation during the hotter afternoon hours

IN THE KITCHEN

- Scrap dishes well before washing or rinsing
- Fill the sink with warm soapy water for washing dishes, and use a second sink, or container, of clear water for rinsing, to avoid the tap water from running needlessly during dish washing
- Run the dishwasher only when full
- Consider replacing old dishwashers with new water-saving dishwashers

¹ W.B.Solley, R.R. Pierce and H.A.Pearlman. 1998. Estimated Use of Water in the United States in 1995 (USGS Circular 1200). USGS. Reston, VA. P. 27.

² Amy Vickers. 2001. Handbook of Water Use and Conservation. WaterPlow Press. Amherst, MA. P. 140

³ Waterwiseer.org 1999 American Water Works Association

IN THE BATHROOM

- Consider showering, which uses less water than bathing
- New low-flow showerheads can save 1-2 gallons per minute
- Installing a simple shower timer will alert you when your 5 minutes are up
- Check leaking toilets and get them replaced
- Replace old toilets, which use 6 gallons per flush with new toilets which only use 1.5 gallons per flush
- Check faucets and faulty fixtures for leaks and replace worn washers, o-rings and packing
- Insulate hot water pipes as water is wasted while you are waiting for hot water to start running in the shower

IN THE LAUNDRY ROOM

- High efficiency washers use about 23 gallons of water per load, as compared to 41 gallons used by old models⁴
- Use shorter cycles for lightly soiled loads
- Only run washer when it is full

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⁴ ENERGY STAR U.S. DOE/EPA
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