

INDOOR

(Information borrowed from sbwater.org, epa.gov, wateruseitwisely.com, bewaterwise.com, and calwater.com)

Bathroom

-45% of household's total water consumption in bathroom

-27% attributed to toilet, 2% to bath, 17% to shower

- A well-maintained toilet can mean big water savings. Usually, a 100-gallon a day toilet leak is not very noticeable. Put a few drops of food coloring or toilet tablets in the tank and wait for 15 minutes. If the water in the bowl changes color, then you have a leak. A bad leak can send thousands of gallons silently down the drain.
- DO NOT use a brick in your toilet tank - it may disintegrate and cause problems in your lines. Instead, consider installing a low-flow toilet that uses 1.6 gallons per flush.
- Get a water check-up from your local water provider, which will include checking your toilets for leaks.
- Install an Ultra Low-flush Toilet (ULFT): If you have an older style toilet, you could be using up to 40% of your indoor water use in toilet flushing. Older model toilets will use between 3.5 and 7 gallons per flush. ULFTs are proven technology and only use 1.6 gallons per flush. (A high quality ULFT can be purchased for approximately \$100 - \$150).
- Keep Trash Out of the Toilet: Every time you flush a cigarette butt, facial tissue or other small bit of trash down the toilet, you waste five to seven gallons of water. Use the wastebasket for disposing of trash.
- Turning off the tap while brushing your teeth in the morning and at bedtime can save up to 8 gallons of water per day, which equals 240 gallons a month.
- Rinse Your Razor in the Sink: Before shaving, partially fill the sink with warm water. This will rinse the blade just as well and use less water.
- Make sure there are aerators on all of your faucets.
- Install a low flow shower head
- The shower accounts for approximately 20% of indoor water use, and 30% to 40% of hot water use. Older showerheads put out water at a rate of 4.5 to 8 gallons per minute (gpm). Low-flow models operate at a range of 1.5 to 2.5 gpm.
- Low-flow showerheads are available in a wide range of flow characteristics, so it should be possible to find a model that suits you.
- Use a wrench or pliers to unscrew the old showerhead. You may wrap a layer of Teflon tape around the threads. Then screw on the new showerhead. Use the shut-off valve behind the head to shut off the water while soaping up without losing the water temperature when the water is turned on again.
- Shorten your shower: Even a one- or two-minute reduction can save up to 700 gallons per month.

- In the shower, a lot of water can be wasted while soaping up. Wet down, turn off the water, soap up and then turn the water on for rinsing.
- If you take a bath, stopper the drain immediately and adjust the temperature as you fill the tub.

Kitchen

-2% of household's water use from dishwashers

-16% from faucets

- Install a faucet aerator
- Before scrubbing your pots and pans, wash them first. Instead of running water continuously, fill wash and rinse basins with water. Use a minimum amount of detergent. Add vinegar (1/4 to 1/2 cup) to dishwasher to prevent grease from clinging to dishes, pots and pans.
- When washing dishes by hand, don't let the water run while rinsing. Fill one sink with wash water and the other with rinse water
- Presoak grills, oven parts, etc., overnight. Wash with an abrasive scrub brush or pad and use plenty of elbow grease to minimize water use.
- Run only full loads in the dishwasher. Avoid using the extra cycle.
- Many automatic dishwashers do not require rinsing dishes before loading the machine, but if yours does, pond water in the sink and soak them.
- Installing a hot water on-demand system if the kitchen and bathroom are far from the water heater can save water. If you choose to install such a system, select a system that is energy neutral. An on-demand system that requires a constantly running recirculating pump may save a little water, but it will waste a lot of energy.
- Boiling requires very little water if you use a tight fitting lid to conserve moisture.
- By steaming you can save all the vitamins and minerals, too. But if you do boil vegetables, save the water for soups and sauces... they will be tastier and more nutritious.
- Remove ice cubes from the freezer a few minutes before you need the ice. The cubes will loosen at room temperature and will save several quarts of water if they are not run under the tap.
- Don't use running water to thaw food. Keep a pitcher of water in the refrigerator instead of running the tap for cold drinks, so that every drop goes down you not the drain.
- Use the garbage disposal sparingly. Compost instead and save gallons every time.
- Install water softening systems only when necessary. Save water and salt by running the minimum number of regenerations necessary to maintain water softness.

Laundry

-22% of household's water use comes from washing machine

- **Install a High Efficiency Washing Machine:** Front-loading horizontal-axis machines use 1/3 less water than top-loading vertical-access machines. The standard top-loader uses from 35-55 gallons per load, whereas a front loader will use from 25-30 gallons per load.
- As well as saving water, the front-loading machines also save energy. Front-loading machines still cost more than the U.S. standard top-loading models, but the price will continue to fall as they become more available and the demand increases.
- When doing laundry, match the water level to the size of the load.
- Presoak heavily soiled items and always use a minimum amount of detergent.
- **Re-use Water:** For many laundry and household cleaning jobs, a low-sudsing, biodegradable detergent will result in cleaner rinse water which can be used again.

How to Check for Leaks

While you're carefully watching your water usage, it's important to make sure that water is not slipping away due to undetected leaks in your system. Here's a simple procedure that can tell you if you have a leak and how much water you're losing.

- 1.** Locate your water meter. It is usually located near the street in front of your home.
- 2.** Read the meter twice – first at night after the day's water use has ended, and again in the morning before any water is used.
- 3.** Subtract the first number from the second reading to tell how much water (if any) leaked out overnight.
- 4.** If you suspect a leak, your pipes and connections should be checked and repaired quickly.