

# **BOROUGH OF TUCKERTON**

## **WATER AND SEWER DEPARTMENT**

### **WATER CONSERVATION GUIDE**

#### **Water Efficiency Practices for Domestic Indoor Water Use**

**Only 1 percent of the earth's water is available for drinking. The average adult uses between 125 and 150 gallons of water a day. Our excessive water use habits deplete potable drinking water supplies and return trillions of gallons of wastewater to streams and coastal waters. The following indoor water efficiency practices can save as much as 25,000 gallons of water per person per year. Water efficiency practices not only save water, they save money.**

**New Jersey is often referred to as being "water rich" since we typically receive about 45 inches of precipitation annually. However, rainfall varies from year to year and even regionally within the state (the hilly northwest is generally wetter than the coastal plain to the southeast). Despite fairly abundant precipitation in most years, increased customer demands quickly deplete water reserves in even moderately dry years.**

**Summer outdoor water use increases dramatically as people water lawns and gardens, wash cars, and fill swimming pools. From May thru September, when hotter, drier weather conditions prevail, it is even more important to conserve water in order to avoid shortages and disruptive (and costly) water use restrictions.**

**By using water wisely, we can preserve more water in reservoirs and aquifers while sustaining levels in our streams, lakes and rivers. These water savings are simple to put into practice and enhance recreational uses and aesthetic enjoyment while providing and protecting habitat for our wildlife. They also can reduce the amount of public dollars spent on water supply infrastructure while minimizing energy costs and the unnecessary generation of greenhouse gases.**

#### **General Water Efficiency Practices**

The following water efficiency practices apply to general domestic water use. Bathroom, kitchen and laundry water use are addressed in later sections.

- Shut off water when not in use, such as when you brush your teeth or shave.
- Install low flow faucet aerators or laminar flow restrictors that limit flow to <2.5gpm on all faucets in the house. These devices are readily available at most hardware and building supply stores.
- Never put water down the drain when you can use it for something else, such as watering plants.
- Insulate water pipes and hot water heaters. This retains heat so that you don't have to run the water as long for it to get hot. It also saves on energy costs.
- As they wear out, replace water-wasting appliances, such as washing machines and dishwashers, with water efficient ones.
- Avoid water softening systems unless absolutely necessary. Backwashing these systems uses large quantities of water. If you do use a water softener, run the minimum amount of regenerations recommended to maintain softness.
- Turn off pumps, water softeners, and other water-using equipment while on vacation.

- **Check for leaks.**
  1. **Detect leaks in toilet tanks by dropping food coloring in the tank (12 drops). Do not flush the toilet for at least an hour. If the tank leaks the dye will show up in the bowl.**
  2. **If you are on municipal water and have a meter at your house, check the meter over a period of time when no one is using water. If the meter moves, you have a leak.**
  3. **Replace leaky faucets. One leaking faucet can waste approximately 3000 gallons a month.**

### Water Efficiency Practices in the Bathroom

More than one fourth of all domestic indoor water consumption is used in the bathroom. The following water efficiency practices will help you save water in the bathroom.

- Install ultra low flow toilets (ULF) that use a maximum of 1.6 gal/flush (6.0L/flush) or retrofit existing toilets with displacement bottles or dams. Dual flush toilets offer a choice between the 1.6-gallon flush for solid wastes and a 1.0-gallon flush for liquid only. Never put bricks in toilet tanks; they disintegrate over time. Use a squat, fat glass jar, like a pickle jar, no more than 6" high, filled with water. Glass is heavier than plastic and less apt to shift around in the tank.
- Don't use the toilet as a garbage disposal. Avoid unnecessary toilet flushing by disposing of tissues, cigarette butts and the like in the trash and composting vegetable food waste.
- Replace or repair toilet flush handles that stick in the flush position.
- Avoid using automatic bowl cleaners in your toilet tank. These chemicals rapidly degrade flapper valves and other tank components, causing the toilet to leak.
- Adjust the toilet tank float level so that water fills no higher than .5-1.0" below the top of the overflow pipe. At higher levels water can flow down the pipe and leak through to the bowl. The refill valve then tops off the tank, causing a continuous cycle of drain and fill.
- Install low flow showerhead devices that limit flow to <2.5gpm and take shorter showers.
- Fill bathtubs no more than half full.

### Water Efficiency Practices in the Kitchen

The following water efficiency practices can be applied to routine kitchen chores to save water.

- Operate dishwashers with full loads only. Use the water-save cycle if your dishwasher is equipped with one.
- If washing dishes by hand, rinse them in a basin rather than under running water.
- Store drinking water in the refrigerator rather than running the tap for cold water.
- Compost food scraps rather than using a garbage disposal. Not only do disposal units waste water; the fine particles they produce can clog the sanitary sewer system.
- Consider installing an instant water heater on the kitchen faucet. This reduces the time needed to run water until it becomes hot.
- Do not run water to melt ice or thaw frozen foods. Defrost them in a microwave or in the refrigerator overnight.
- Rinse vegetables in a pan of water rather than under running water.

## Water Efficiency Practices in the Laundry

Water use in the laundry is usually the second highest domestic indoor water use. The following water efficiency practices are designed to save water in the laundry.

- Wash full loads only. If unable to wash a full load, set your washer to the appropriate water level setting.
- Consider replacing your top loading, vertical axis washer with a more efficient horizontal axis washer. Most of these are front loading like laundromat machines, but some newer models are also top loading. These washers rotate clothes rather than agitating them and use much less water, an average of 27 gallons per load compared to an average of 43 gallons for conventional washers.

**There is never enough water to waste! Think about water every time you use it!**

### OUTDOOR WATER USE

During the hot, dry summer months outdoor landscaping requires regular watering. Here are simple steps that can reduce water consumption outdoors during hot summer days.

1. Repair leaky spigots, sprinkler heads, valves and hoses. One leaky drip per second wastes 6,000 gallons of water per year!
2. Landscape with plants that need little water. Use mulch around shrubs to hold moisture.
3. Water lawns (and outdoor plants) less frequently (2-3 times per week) for no more than 30 minutes. This allows the soil to absorb the water and enables roots to grow more deeply, which encourages drought tolerance;
4. Never water during the heat of the day, as this promotes evaporation and leads to water waste;
5. Sprinkler systems should be set to water after sunset or before dawn, and by law should be equipped with an automated shut-off switch that disables the system following rainfall.
6. Avoid runoff by adjusting sprinklers to cover the lawn – not the sidewalk. Short, but frequent watering times work best and reduce run-off.
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8. Watch the water level in your pool to avoid spilling and use a cover to prevent excessive evaporation.
9. When you wash the car, use a shutoff nozzle on the hose.
10. Use a rain barrel to capture water from a downspout to use later for watering gardens and plants;
11. Use soaker hoses or drip irrigation to water trees, gardens and flower beds;
12. Sweep it, don't wash it away — To clean up dead leaves, dirt and debris, use a broom, rake or leaf blower on sidewalks, driveways and patios rather than a hose. Wash down paved surfaces only to alleviate immediate fire or sanitation hazards.

**PLEASE USE WATER WISELY**



**"REMEMBER EVERY DROP COUNTS"**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT US**

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**"THANK YOU"**