

Water Facts

- The average U.S. household uses 350 gallons of water per day, according to the American Water Works Association. Depending on the region, households use 20 to 62 percent of that total outdoors on lawns, pools and such. Saving water outdoors, then, can really make a dent. Indoors, homeowners can reduce water use by about 30 percent by installing more efficient water fixtures and regularly checking for leaks. Here is where water goes in our homes (numbers are rounded):



Source: American Water Works Association



McHenry County Government Water Resources

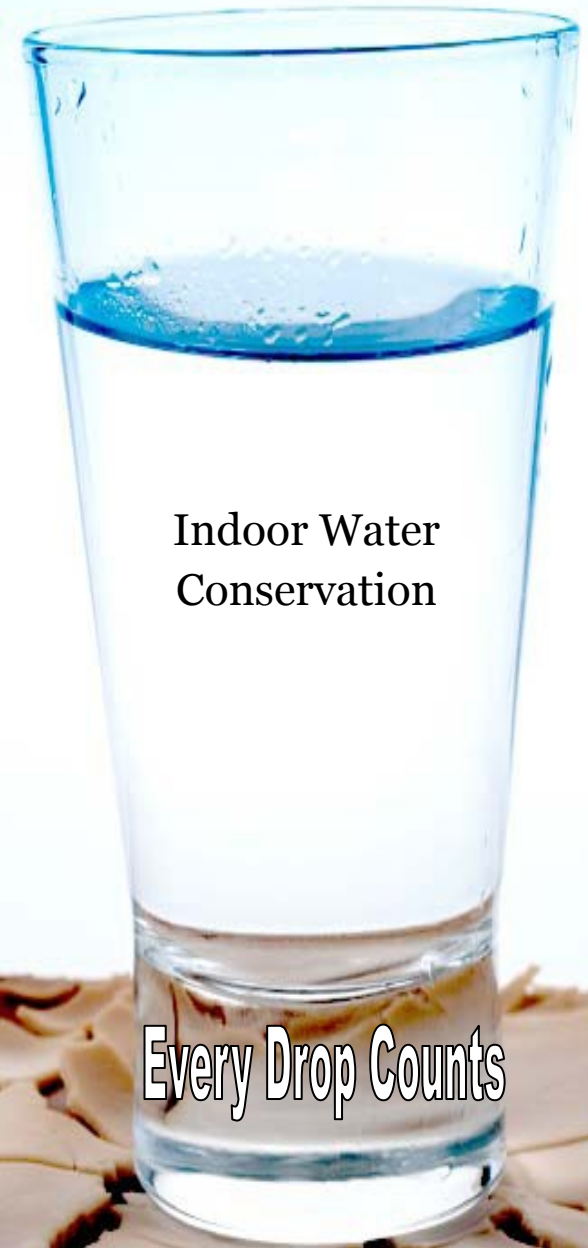
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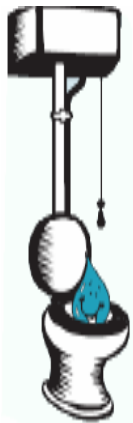
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McHenry County Government

Water Resources



Water Wasters in the Bathroom and Kitchen –Be Watchful!



Toilet Tips

- Check for toilet leaks by adding food coloring to the back tank. Do not flush. If the toilet is leaking the food color should appear in the bowl within 1 hour. Repeat this test on occasion as sometimes a defective flap will seal and sometimes it will not.
- Don't use your toilet as a trash can. Unnecessary flushing wastes water.

- Consider purchasing low flow toilets or install a water displacement device.

Shower/Bath Tips



- Replace your showerhead with a low-flow version, saving 2.5 gallons per minute.
- Take shorter showers. Try a "Navy" shower; get wet, turn off the water, soap and scrub, turn the water on to rinse.
- In the shower, instead of increasing the hot or cold water to adjust the water temperature, try decreasing the flow to achieve a comfortable water temperature.
- Use the minimum amount of water needed for a bath by closing the drain first and filling the tub only 1/3 full. The initial burst of cold water can be warmed by adding hot water later.
- Don't let the water run while brushing your teeth, washing your face or shaving.

Kitchen Tips



- Minimize the use of kitchen sink disposals; they require a lot of water to operate properly.
- Store drinking water in the refrigerator instead of letting the tap run to get a cool glass of water.
- Thaw meat and frozen foods in the refrigerator overnight instead of running water over them.
- When washing dishes by hand, fill one sink or basin with soapy water. Quickly rinse under a slow stream of water. Use the dirty water to run the disposal if necessary.
- Buy dishwashers with water and energy saving options.
- Fully load dishwashers; they use the same amount of water regardless of the number of dishes in them.

Other Indoor Water Wasters

Appliances

- Adjust the amount of water used in the washing machine according to load size.
 - As you replace appliances, especially washing machines, buy the ones that have water saving features.
 - Never install a water-to-air heat pump or air conditioning system. Air-to-air models are just as efficient and do not waste water.
- Install water softeners only when necessary. Save water and salt by running the minimum amount of regenerations necessary to maintain water softness. Turn water softeners off while on vacation.



Divert From the Drain

- Think about the water you are putting down the drain. Use it for watering a plant, garden or cleaning.
- Reuse fish tank water on your household plants-it makes a nice fertilizer too.



Maintenance Tips

- Verify that your home is leak free. Many homes have hidden water leaks. Read your water meter before and after a two-hour period when no water is being used. If the meter does not read exactly the same, there is a leak. But remember toilet leaks are not consistent. Sometimes they hang up, sometimes they don't.
- Repair dripping faucets by replacing washers. If your faucet is dripping at the rate of one drop per second, you can expect to waste 2,700 gallons in just one year!
- Retrofit all household faucets by installing aerators with flow restrictors.



- Insulate your water pipes. You'll get hot water faster and avoid wasting water.
- If you have a well at your home. Check your pump. If the pump turns on and off while you are not using water, then you have a leak.

You're In Control

- Try to do one thing each day to save water. Don't worry if the savings are minimal. Every drop counts. And every person can make a difference.
- Be aware of and follow all water conservation and water shortage rules and restrictions that may be in effect in your area.
- Make sure your children are aware of the need to conserve water.