

# Water

## Our Most Precious Resource

Water is the most abundant resource on our planet but it is also our most precious. Just 1% of all the water on the earth is available for human consumption.

The American Water Works Association and Popular Mechanics estimate that the average American Single Family Household uses 363 gallons of water a day. Each individual in the typical single family home uses between 70 – 72.5 gallons of water a day for indoor use and the rest is used outdoors.

A single-family household with four (4) members will use over 2,500 gallons of water in a typical week (7days). That equates to over 130,000 gallons a year.

With smart CONSERVATION practices the average Guilderland household could reduce water usage by up to 30%. This equates to lower water bill, lower stress on the Town infrastructure and fewer pollutants entering our ecosystem.

### FOUR BASIC STEPS TO A WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM

#### 1. Economize

We have always thought of water as being plentiful and cheap (like oil). Become aware of the amount of water you use and look for ways to use less. Outdoors, over sprinkling lawns and gardens is bad for plants and grass. Water grass and plants only when they need it.

**THINK as you use water.**

#### 2. Repair Leaks

Leaks are one of the greatest wasters of water. One drop of water a second wastes 2,400 gallons of water a year. Check your water meter to see if you have any leaks (shut off all water uses in your house for an hour and see if your meter moves).

### 3. Install Water Saving Devices

Faucet aerators, flow regulators for showerheads and displacement devices for toilets reduce your water consumption. Look for Water Sense labeled products and other products in the market place that tout at least 20% more efficiency than their less efficient counterparts.

### 4. Reuse Water

Unused or slightly used water may be suitable for other purposes, even without treatment or filtration (watering plants etc.) Make the most of your water before it goes down the drain. Use of recycled rainwater saves tap water, rain barrels work.

## Indoor Water Conservation Tips

1. Only run dishwasher and washing machine with full loads. You could save up to 1,000 gallons of water a month.
2. Compost instead of using the garbage disposal.
3. Replace your showerhead with water-efficient model.
4. Rinse produce in a pan of water instead of using running water.
5. Use water used to rinse produce to water houseplants.
6. Check you toilet for leaks by putting food coloring in your toilet tank and checking the bowl for color. These leaks can waste 500 gallons of water a month.
7. After cleaning your fish tank, use the old water on your plants. The used fish tank water is rich in nitrogen and phosphates.
8. When shopping for new appliances and bathroom fixtures, check the energy-efficiency of the models.
9. Install Low volume toilets.
10. Don't use running water to thaw foods.

## Indoor Water Conservation Tips 2

1. Repair leaky faucets, it's simple and can save over 100 gallons a week.
2. Teach children to turn off faucets tightly after each use.
3. Soak pots and pans rather than letting the water run on them while scraping then clean.
4. Turn off the water while brushing your teeth. You can save 4 gallons of water each time you brush.
5. Make sure the toilet flapper valve doesn't get stuck after flushing. A stuck flapper is like letting your garden hose run after you use it.
6. Make sure there are aerators on all household faucets.
7. Insulate hot water pipes so you do not have to run the water as much to get hot water to the faucet.
8. Install water-softening systems only when absolutely necessary. The softening cycle uses water and adds sodium to the water.
9. Cook foods in as little water as possible. This saves water and allows the food to retain more nutrients.
10. Turn off your water when you shave or switch to an electric razor. You could save up to 100 gallons of water a week.

## Indoor Water Conservation Tips 3

1. When you give your pet fresh water, throw the old water of shrubs or trees.
2. When you wash your hands don't let the water run while you lather your hands.
3. If you accidentally drop ice cubes on the floor, don't throw them away, put them in a houseplant and allow them to melt and water the plant.
4. Try and bathe your children together.
5. After defrosting the freezer, use the defrosted water for plants and trees.
6. When washing pets, use a bucket or basin rather than a running faucet or garden hose.
7. Keep a pitcher of water in the refrigerator rather than running the faucet to get a cool drink/
8. Drop the used facial in the wastebasket instead of flushing it. Avoiding unnecessary flushing saves water.
9. Use the proper size pan for cooking. Larger pans require more water due to their larger volume.
10. Time your shower. Showers lasting more than 5 minutes use more water.

## Outdoor Water Saving Tips

1. Install rain sensors on your in-ground sprinkling system so you do not water your lawn when it's raining.
2. Check sprinkling systems frequently and adjust so that you lawn is watered not you house, sidewalks or driveway.
3. Sweep your driveway rather than hose it off.
4. Plant scrubs and trees or use non-living landscape options on difficult to water areas such as steep inclines.
5. Use a rain barrel to catch free rainwater for watering plants and gardens.
6. Use a rain garden to retain and utilize rainfall wisely.
7. Using organic mulch around plants will reduce evaporation and save hundreds of gallons of water a year.
8. Divide lawn watering cycles into shorter periods to reduce runoff and allow for better absorption.
9. Check your pool and pool pump for leaks.
10. Install covers on pools and spa to lower evaporation.

## Outdoor Water Saving Tips 2

1. Only water lawns when they need it. If you walk across your lawn and leave footprints, it's time to water.
2. Adjust your lawnmower to a higher setting. Long grass shades the root system and holds soil moisture better.
3. Use porous materials for walkways and patios to keep water in your yard and prevent wasteful run off.
4. Install a water efficient drip irrigation system for trees, scrubs and flowers.
5. Reduce grass in your yard by planting scrubs. Cover ground with rock or stone mulch.
6. Don't water lawns on windy days; sidewalks and driveways do not need watering.
7. Water your plants deeply but less frequently to create healthier and stronger landscapes.
8. When water grass on slopes use a soaker hose to prevent wasteful runoff.
9. When the kids want to cool off, use the sprinkler in an area of the lawn that needs it the most.
10. Make sure your swimming pools, fountains and ponds are equipped with recirculating pumps.

## Outdoor Water Saving Tips 3

1. We're more likely to notice leaky faucets indoors, but don't forget to check outdoor faucets, pipes and hoses for leaks.
2. When backwashing your pool filter, consider using the water on your landscape.
3. Aerate your lawn. Punch holes in your lawn about 6 inches apart so water can reach the roots rather than running off.
4. More plants die from over-watering than from under-watering. Be sure only to water your plants when they need it.
5. In summer, bathe pets outdoors in areas in need of water.
6. Use sprinklers that throw big drops of water close to the ground. Smaller drops of water and mists often evaporate before they hit the ground.
7. Wash your car on the lawn. You clean your car and water the lawn at the same time.
8. When you wash your car use a hose nozzle and turn off the water while you wash your car.
9. Support projects or businesses that use reclaimed water for irrigation and other uses. This includes car washes that recycle water.
10. When landscaping or planting around the house, consider using low water use plants.