

# Water Conservation and YOU

## What You Can Do

There are many ways in which individuals can contribute to water savings both around their own household and in the political arena. Read below to find out more.

### I. Understand your local water system:

1. What is the source of your water?
2. Who provides your water?
3. What incentives to conserve does your water provider offer?

### II. Encourage conservation where you live

- Find out what your local water provider offers to encourage water conservation.
- Encourage your water provider to improve the efficiency of your local water system.
- Encourage the water planners in your region to incorporate conservation into their regional plan.

### III. Curb your water use!

1. **Only run the dishwasher or washing machine with a full load.** If it is time to replace either of these appliances, check in with your utility about rebates for water-conserving versions and purchase those instead.
2. **Water your lawn on the right day.** Are you odd or even? Most Texas cities restrict outdoor water use to one or two days a week during times of drought. Save water and avoid fines by learning and following your city's schedule.
3. **Catch the condensation from your AC unit and use it in your yard.** Depending on how your air conditioner is programmed, it can produce gallons of water per day. Catch that water in a bucket and put it on your garden, shrubs and trees.
4. **Turn the water off when you brush your teeth.** This simple step can save up to 8 gallons of water per day.
5. **Fix leaky faucets.** Leaky faucets can waste up to 7 gallons of water per day. To check for leaks at home, read your water meter and avoid using water for 2 hours. Read the meter again after this period. If the amount is different, you have a leak.
6. **Fix running toilets.** Running toilets can waste a lot of water. Fix these leaks as soon as you find them. Check with the manufacturer of your toilet for the proper replacement "flapper" to ensure maximum efficiency.
7. **Inspect your irrigation system.** Have your system inspected by your water utility or a certified irrigator to make sure it is operating correctly, identify any problems and help you set it to run more efficiently. Many cities offer free inspections.
8. **Install faucet aerators and low-flow showerheads.** These water saving devices are cheap and easy to install. Many utilities give them away to their customers. Check with your utility and pick up a few extras to share with your neighbors!
9. **Install a high efficiency toilet.** Toilets account for about 25% of water used in the home. Depending on the age of your toilet, you can save up to 5 gallons per flush by replacing older models. Check with your city for possible rebates.
10. **Make water conservation a whole-family activity.** Challenge your family members to think of new ways to save water and to be part of the solution.



Water efficient toilets can save well over 10,000 gallons per household per year. Photo courtesy of Caroma USA.