



Each person uses 80-100 gallons of water per day. During periods of drought, it is important minimize water use to ensure enough is available for everyone. Here are some tips to help your household during periods of drought.

## Before a Drought

- **General water conservation measures.**
  - Check your faucets, pipes and toilets for leaks; even a small faucet leak can waste as much as 20 gallons of water.
  - Do not pour water down the drain when there may be another use for it (e.g., watering plants or a garden).
  - When purchasing a new appliance, choose one that is more energy and water efficient.
- **Conserve water in the bathroom**
  - Turn off the water while you brush your teeth, wash your face, or shave, instead of leaving the faucet running.
  - Install aerators with flow restrictors on all household faucets.
  - Replace your shower heads with low-flow heads, which use less water.
  - Install a low-flow toilet to replace your existing model; this can cut your home water consumption by 20 percent.
  - Install a toilet displacement device.
    - Place a 1 gallon jug of water to displace toilet flow.
    - Do not use a brick, it may dissolve and loose pieces may cause damage to internal parts.
- **Conserve water in the kitchen.**
  - Run your dishwasher only when it is full; select the water-saving cycle, if you have that feature.
  - Store drinking water in your refrigerator to avoid the need to run water in the sink to get it cold.
  - Clean fruits and vegetables in a pan filled with water rather than running water from the tap; reuse the water in the pan for other purposes (e.g., watering plants).
  - Hand wash dishes by filling two containers – one with soapy water, the other with rinse water containing a small amount of chlorine bleach.
  - Avoid rinsing dishes prior to putting them in a dishwasher to conserve water.
  - Kitchen sink disposals require lots of water to operate properly; start a compost pile as an alternate method of disposing food waste.
- **Conserve water while doing laundry.**
  - Operate automatic clothes washers only when they are fully loaded.
  - Set the water level for the appropriate size of your load to avoid wasting water.
- **Conserve water outdoors.**
  - Do not overwater your lawn. Lawns only need to be watered every five to seven days in the summer.

- Water lawns during the early morning hours when temperatures and wind speed are the lowest; this reduces evaporation and waste.
- Plant native and/or drought-tolerant grasses, ground covers, shrubs and trees that can survive dry periods without watering.
- Use mulch to retain moisture in the soil.

## During a Drought

- **Stay informed.**
  - Monitor potential drought conditions in your area at the U.S. Drought Monitor website.  
<http://drought.unl.edu/dm/monitor.html>
  - Listen to the radio or television for situation developments and instruction for water conservation or restrictions for your area.
- **Increase your water conservation measures.**
  - Limit how much water each person may use.
  - Do not flush toilets if it is not necessary.
  - Wash things only when it is necessary to do so. Only wash a full load.
  - Do not take baths; take short showers instead. Turn on the water to get wet and rinse; lather with the water off.
  - Use bottled water when possible, such as for brushing your teeth, washing your face or hands.

## After a Drought

- **Once the situation is over, it is still important to continue to conserve water for future droughts.**
  - Continue to be aware of how much water is used on a daily basis.
  - Make changes to your home to conserve water.

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