



Even though water is the most abundant resource on the planet, it doesn't always come to us in a convenient, easy-to-access form. For those of us who are less endowed with water resources, water conservation is sometimes the best way to increase our access to water—by needing less of it.

#### WHY CONSERVE WATER?

- ◆ First of all, it's always a good idea to conserve water—it reduces the burden on infrastructure and lessens the impact on the rivers, lakes, and wells that provide us with water.
- ◆ Second, your community is still served by septic systems, which have a limited capacity to treat wastewater. If you run water without thinking, you could overload your septic system and cause it to fail.
- ◆ Third, reducing your water use will help keep your monthly bills down and save you money.

This brochure includes a list of hints for minimizing water use in your home. If you have any questions about water concerns or the information provided here, contact the Indiana Rural Community Assistance Program at (800) 382-9895.

## For every room in the house



- ◆ Install low-flow faucet aerators on all your household faucets. Some aerators can restrict flow to less than 1.0 gpm.
- ◆ Check for leaks! One leaky faucet can use up to 4,000 gallons per month. Try the following steps to see if you have a leak:
  - Start by turning off all faucets and water-using appliances and make sure no one uses water during the testing period.
  - Take a reading on your water meter, wait for about 30 minutes, then take a second reading. If the dial has moved, you have a leak.
  - Check toilets for leaks by placing a few drops of food coloring in the tank. If after 15 minutes the dye shows up in the bowl, the toilet has a leak.
- ◆ Keep a plastic basin in your sink and collect faucet water for use on your landscape.  
(Source: [www.watermiser.org](http://www.watermiser.org))

## In the kitchen



- ◆ Ten to 20 gallons of water a day can be saved by running the dishwasher only when it is full.
- ◆ If dishes are washed by hand, save water by filling the sink or a dishpan with water rather than running the water continuously. Rinse in a sink partially filled with clean water.
- ◆ Clean vegetables in a sink or pan partially filled with water rather than running water from the tap.
- ◆ Re-use the water that vegetables are washed in for watering houseplants or for cleaning.
- ◆ Instead of waiting for tap water to get cold enough for drinking, keep a bottle of water in the refrigerator.
- ◆ Whenever possible, compost food scraps or dispose of them in the garbage rather than using the garbage disposal, which requires a large amount of water for operation. Garbage disposals can also overload a septic system and cause it to fail more quickly.

## In the bathroom



- ◆ Do not run the faucet continuously while shaving, brushing your teeth, etc.
- ◆ Avoid using caustic

toilet bowl cleaners such as toilet tank tablets. These products alter the pH of water in your toilet tank and damage plastic and rubber toilet parts causing severe leaks.

- ◆ Flush less frequently. "If it's yellow, let it mellow; if it's brown, flush it down."
- ◆ Take shorter showers.
- ◆ Turn off the water while soaping up or shampooing.
- ◆ Keep a bucket in the shower to collect excess water. You can use this water to irrigate your plants.
- ◆ Install a water-efficient showerhead with a flow rate of less than 2.5 gallons (9.5 liters) per minute.
- ◆ Take a quick shower rather than a bath and save an average of 20 gallons (76 liters) of water.

## In the laundry room



- ◆ Operate the washer with full loads only – even if the machine has an adjustable load setting. A full load is the most efficient way to wash clothes.

- ◆ Pretreat stains to avoid rewashing.
- ◆ Use the shortest wash cycle for lightly soiled loads.

## In the yard



- ◆ Water before 8 A.M. or after 6 P.M. to reduce evaporation.
- ◆ Water no more than 1 inch per week to

prevent runoff.

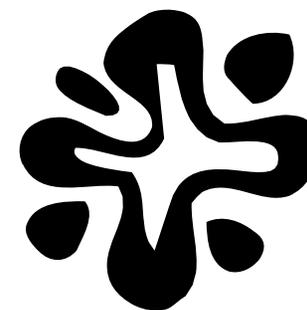
- ◆ Only water when your lawn is thirsty. Overwatering promotes shallow root growth making your lawn less hardy. (To determine if your lawn needs to be watered, simply walk across the grass. If you leave footprints, it's time to water.)
- ◆ Set mower blades high (2- to 3-inch grass length) to promote water retention.
- ◆ Clean driveways and sidewalks with a broom instead of the hose.
- ◆ Check for leaks in outdoor faucets, pipes and hoses.
- ◆ Prevent the creation of leaks by shutting off and draining water lines to outside spigots in the winter.
- ◆ Use a bucket of water to wash your car instead of running the hose.

(Source: EPA 570/9-91-100;  
[www.watermiser.org](http://www.watermiser.org))

## Water

## Conservation

to lower your need for water, maintain your septic system, and reduce your impact on the environment



*This brochure provided as a service of the  
Indiana Rural Community Assistance Program  
(800) 382-9895 / (317) 638-9302  
[www.incap.org/indianaRCAP.htm](http://www.incap.org/indianaRCAP.htm)*

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