INFORMATION PROVIDED FROM Department of Environmental Conservation:

Saving Water Makes Good Sense

We'll never know the worth of water 'till the well goes dry.

--18th century Scottish proverb

Water Conservation for the Public

The average person uses 50 gallons of water a day. If you obtain water from a public water supply, your water bill lets you know that each drop wasted costs you money. Those of us who get our water from private wells are concerned about wells going dry. These simple tips can help us all save money and preserve New York's precious water supplies.

What You Can Do Indoors to Save Water

"Hector's Pig" was the winning entry in a Water Week poster contest.

- Turn off the faucet while shaving, washing up, brushing teeth, and washing dishes.
  The average person uses 10.9 gallons of water from the faucet a day.
- Fix dripping and leaking faucets and toilets.
  A faucet leaking 30 drops per minute wastes 54 gallons a month. See the USGS Drip Calculator link in the right hand margin of this page.
- Don't run the tap to make water cold or hot.
  Instead, keep a pitcher of water in the refrigerator.
- Put a plastic jug filled with water in the tank of conventional toilets.
  You'll save that much volume in water each time you flush.
- Throw used facial tissues into the waste basket instead of using the toilet as a waste basket.
  You'll save up to 6 gallons of water each time you don't flush.
- Wash only full loads of dishes and laundry.
  The average dishwasher uses 8-12 gallons whether or not it's a full load.
- Install water-saving plumbing fixtures.
  A low-flow shower head saves up to 7.5 gallons a minute.
- Take shorter showers or fill the bathtub only part way.
  The average person uses 15 gallons a day in bathing and hygiene.

What You Can Do Outdoors to Save Water

- Raise your lawn mower cutting height.
  Longer grass needs less water.
- Use a pool cover.
  It will reduce water loss from evaporation.
- Use mulch around shrubs and garden plants to save soil moisture.
  Apply organic mulches 4 inches deep to keep plant roots cool, prevent soil crusting, minimize evaporation, and reduce weed growth.
- Wash cars less frequently.
  If your car desperately needs a bath, take it to a car wash that recycles water.
- Sweep sidewalks and steps rather than hosing them.
  Eliminating a weekly 5-minute pavement hose-down could save between 625 and 2500 gallons of water per year depending on the flow rate.

- If your community allows watering, water lawns and gardens on alternate mornings instead of every day.
  Less frequent watering will develop grass with deeper roots, and early morning watering minimizes evaporation.
- When using automatic lawn watering systems, override the system in wet weather or use a rain gauge to control when and how much water to use.
  A fixed watering schedule wastes water. Irrigate only when needed. It saves water and can actually improve your lawn's health.
- Keep fire hydrants closed.
  Preserve water and water pressure for fighting fires.

What You Can Do on the Job to Save Water

- Check for leaks and emphasize leak reporting and repair.
  A few small leaks can add up to an astonishing amount of water.
- Consider alternatives to water use that are not related to health and safety.
  For example, use a broom instead of a hose to routinely clean sidewalks and driveways.
- Turn off water-using equipment when not in use, including dishwashers, garbage disposals, and food troughs.
  When on the job, we tend to overlook extra use of water and leaking equipment.
- Work with all employees to develop methods and procedures that will reduce water use.
  Evaluate how employees are using water and determine, with their help, more efficient alternatives.
- Eliminate daytime landscape watering.
  Water in the early morning and consider weather-based or moisture-sensing controls.
- Reduce fleet washing as much as possible, or use water reclaim systems.
  Use best-practice cleaning protocols.

More Water Saving Tips

Visit EPA's WaterSense website for more tips on saving water indoors and outdoors (a direct link is available on the right hand side of this page under "Links Leaving DEC's Website"). DEC has been a WaterSense partner since 2014.

Water Conservation for Public Water Supplies

Water conservation activities reduce water demand, improve use efficiency and reduce water loss and waste. Conservation measures may be short-term or long-term. Long-term measures are substitutes for new water supplies while short-term, or emergency measures are applied to quickly fix temporary emergency water problems. When designing a conservation program it is necessary to have an accurate picture of water demands in order to estimate potential savings. For this reason, a water supply audit, outlining all sources of supply and demand, followed by a demand projection, is key to an achievable plan. An accurate water audit cannot be accomplished without accurate water measurement and records.

Why Should Water Withdrawal Systems Conserve Water?

Conserving water has the following benefits:

- Postponed or reduced size for expansion of water withdrawal or wastewater treatment facilities, or development of new supply sources, by allowing existing sources, water withdrawal and/or wastewater treatment systems to serve increasing demands (Water conservation is often the most cost effective alternative. Even where conservation programs necessitate water rate increases for public water supply systems, the average consumer will likely pay less than if the program had not been undertaken.)
- Increased ability to handle emergencies such as drought, mechanical failures, or water contamination
- Variable cost savings in energy and chemicals from reduced production, treatment, and water consumption
- Greater efficiency and increased capacity in wastewater treatment facilities

- Improved in-stream flows in source water and related water resources, reduced costs for habitat protections required for intake structures, and higher quality in wastewater receiving bodies
- Alleviation of competing demands for water resources