

## SAVING WATER AND ENERGY AT HOME

For the average household, a 35 percent reduction or more in water use is feasible, just by following the steps outlined below. The bathroom is a key area on which to focus as nearly 65 percent of all indoor water use occurs there.

### *Saving Water Indoors*

#### 1. Toilets: *Toilets consume the most water inside the home.*

- *Check for leaks.* Put a few drops of food coloring or leak identification tablets in your toilet tank. If the coloring appears within 30 minutes without flushing you have a leak that may waste up to 200,000 liters (52,800 gallons) a year. Often fixing a leak can be as simple as tightening loose connections, reconnecting joints after wrapping Teflon-Tape around the threads, or replacing a worn out float cup, rubber tank ball or flapper (which seals the opening between tank and toilet bowl).
- *Flush toilets less often.* Do not use them as ashtrays or wastebaskets.
- *Toilet dams/displacement devices.* Place plastic bottles filled with water in your toilet tank or use an inexpensive toilet dam to block part of the toilet tank. This can save 40 or more liters (11 gal) of water per day. Avoid bricks that can damage the tank.
- *Ultra-low flush toilets.* Installing an ultra-low flush toilet can save more than 20 liters (5 gal) per flush.

#### 2. Use less water.

- Turn off faucets completely and reduce the amount of water used for hand washing, brushing teeth, shaving, and showering.
- Replace old faucet aerators and showerheads. Newer models tend to use less water and provide more water pressure. Where possible, purchase inexpensive flow restrictors on showers and faucets
- Water-saving shower heads, saving up to 20 liters (5 gal) a minute.
- Faucet aerators saving between 12 and 65 liters (3 and 17 gal) per day.
- When washing dishes by hand, don't leave the rinse water running.
- Fully load your washing machine and dishwasher.
- Purchase more efficient washing machines. Where possible, purchase Energy Star approved machines. Otherwise, front-loading washing machines tend to be more efficient. Comparing product specifications can also help to find the most efficient model.

#### 3. Check for leaks.

Check for leaks in pipes, hoses, faucets and couplings. Leaks can be costly. A leak of only one drop per second wastes about 10,000 (2,643 gal) liters of water per year. Read your water meter before and after a two- hour period when no water is being used. If the meter does not read exactly the same, there is a leak. Fixing leaks is usually less expensive than paying for wasted water (up to 75 liters or 20 gal a day per leak).

### 4. Hot water heater.

- Purchase an efficient water heater. (234 therms per year for a 152 liter or 40 gal gas water heater or 4,671 kWh per year for a 152 liter or 40 gal electric unit)
- Insulate hot water pipes and water heater using foam pipe insulation, water heater jackets, or other approved insulation materials.

### 5. Reuse wastewater.

- Never let water go down the drain when there may be another use for it such as watering a plant or cleaning. For example, when washing off fruit or vegetables, place a bucket under the faucet. Use the water collected in the bucket to water plants.

## *Saving Water Outdoors*

### 1. Cleaning.

- Use a sweeper or broom to clean the garage, driveway, floors or sidewalk instead of a hose. Unnecessary use of a hose wastes 1000 liters (264 gal) of water per hour.
- When using a hose, outfit it with a shut-off nuzzle and when finished, “turn it off” at the faucet instead of at the nozzle to avoid leaks.
- Wash your car on the lawn with a bucket of water and a sponge.

### 2. Garden.

- Don't overwater your lawn, and plant low maintenance landscape with native species adapted to live in your climate conditions (xeriscaping).
- Water the roots of plants, not the leaves.
- Water lawns early or late in the day when temperature and wind are the lowest to reduce losses from evaporation (early morning is usually recommended to minimize mildew, etc.).
- Adjust sprinklers to water lawns and not pavement.
- Use drip hoses where possible instead of sprinklers, which can lose water to evaporation and inaccurate targeting of water.
- Do not leave sprinklers or hoses unattended. Outdoor faucets can flow at rate of more than 1000 liters or 264 gal per hour.
- Use irrigation timers.

**3. Capturing water.**

- 1000 square feet of roof or pavement can collect 1500 liters (396 gal) of water from 1 inch of rain. A cistern or rain-barrels that capture and store rainwater can be used as a source for irrigation or washing. Also, connecting gutter downspouts to collection systems can also help supply the cistern.

**4. Installations.**

- Avoid the installation of ornamental water features (such as fountains) unless the water is recycled.
- If you have a swimming pool consider a new water-saving pool filter. Cover the pool when not in use; up to 200 liters (53 gal) of water per day can be lost because of evaporation. An average sized pool can lose more than 3,500 liters (925 gallons) per month through evaporation if left uncovered.