



CITY OF GULFPORT PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Water Conservation Advice

The primary goal of the water conservation program is to educate the community about the environmental and economic benefits of using water efficiently. One critical form of incentive is to establish information for customers. Many lack knowledge about conserving water and this information may contribute to customers using water more efficiently.

Public education is the driving force behind the success of any program. While the water efficiency incentives program makes good financial sense; its purpose extends well beyond the financial into the realm of public education. A strong water conservation incentive program will help to raise public consciousness and participation in water saving habits and lifestyles.

What will water conservation do??

- Conservation will save money for consumers on water and sewer.
- Conservation will reduce such impacts on the environment as depleting groundwater aquifers.
- Conservation will decrease the amount of wastewater generated, and thereby, maintain the operating efficiency of treatment plants over a longer period of time.
- Conservation will reduce operating costs for utilities and delay costly capital improvements.

When compared to the cost of expanding existing facilities or developing new water sources, the most cost-effective alternative is conservation.

Water Conservation Advice

Baths, showers, and toilet flushing account for most of water used indoors. Here are some ways to help reduce the amount of water used on a daily basis:

Bathroom

- Check your toilet periodically for leaks. Place a few drops of food coloring in the tank. If you have a leak, color will appear in the toilet bowl within 30 minutes. This would indicate that the flapper needs replacing.
- If your shower can fill a one-gallon bucket in less than 20 seconds, then replace it with a water-efficient showerhead.
- Install low-volume toilets.
- Turn off the water while you brush your teeth and save 4 gallons a minute. That's 200 gallons a week for a family of four.
- If your toilet makes a gurgling sound, adjust or replace your flush valve.
- Kinked flapper chains can also cause toilets to run, by preventing the flapper from closing properly. An easy way to prevent this is to thread the chain through a short piece of a plastic straw. This will prevent the chain from turning back on itself and kinking.
- Fill a one-quart plastic bottle with water and place it in the toilet tank. To anchor the bottle, fill it partially with sand or any heavy substance. This does not affect the efficiency of most toilets and can save five or more gallons a day for a family of four.
- Don't use the toilet as a wastebasket.

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- When taking a bath, put the plug in and turn on the hot water. Let it run until the water gets hot, before adding cold water to adjust the temperature.
 - Install a low-flow showerhead, or a flow restrictor. Flow restrictors allow you to reduce or stop the flow of water when it is not needed. Low-flow showerheads reduce the gallons of water used per minute.

Kitchen

- Repair dripping faucets by replacing washers. If your faucet is dripping at a rate of only one drop per second, you can expect to waste 2,700 gallons of water per year.
- When washing dishes by hand, fill one sink or basin with soapy water. Quickly rinse under a slow-moving stream from the faucet.
- Consider installing an instant water heater on your kitchen sink so you don't have to let the water run while it heats up. This will also reduce water-heating costs for your household.
- Wash your produce in the sink or a pan that is partially filled with water instead of running water from the tap.
- Run the dishwasher with full loads only.

Household

- If possible, operate your washing machine only when full, or set water level for the size load you are washing.
- When you shop for a new appliance, consider one offering cycle and load size adjustments. They are more water and energy-efficient than older appliances.

Outdoors

- When washing the car, use soap and water from a bucket. Use a hose with a shut-off nozzle for the final rinse.
- Use a broom, not a hose, when cleaning your driveway and sidewalks.
- Insulate your water pipes. You'll get hot water faster, and avoid wasting water while it heats up.
- Check for hidden leaks. The City of Gulfport has installed electronic water meters that have a built in leak detection system. If the meter does not stop for one hour in a 24 hour timeframe the customer is notified on their water bill that a leak may be present.
- If you have a well, check your pump periodically. Listen to hear if the pump kicks on and off while water is not being used. If it does, you have a leak.

Lawn Maintenance

- Adjust sprinklers so only the lawn is watered, not the house, sidewalk or street.
- Don't water on windy days.
- Water your lawn every third day in the summer. Always water during the cool time of day to minimize evaporation-early morning or late evening is best.
- A heavy rain means you don't have to water at all.
- For landscaping use native or other low-water use trees, shrubs and plants.
- Using a layer of mulch around plants reduces evaporation and promotes plant growth.
- When mowing, raise the blades level to its highest level. Close cut grass makes the roots work harder, requiring more water.

Be Efficient

- Plan and design your landscaping area - evaluate your site and inventory existing plants.
- Evaluate your turf area - identify drainage problems.
- Use efficient irrigation methods - make appropriate seasonal adjustments. Remember not to water on windy days and water only during the cool times of the day.
- Use mulches - mulches include rock, decomposed granite and wood chips.
- Incorporate low-water use plants - Consider using wildflower seeds.
- Appropriate maintenance - This includes proper pruning, weeding, fertilization and irrigation system adjustments.