



CITY OF SANTA CRUZ

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HOUSEHOLD WATER CONSERVATION

Household water conservation not only saves water but helps control water pollution as well. The bathroom is the one room in the house where you can make the most substantial reduction in your personal water use. Two-thirds of the water used inside the house is used in the bathroom, for showers, baths and for flushing toilets.

Each time a toilet is flushed, as much as seven gallons of water flows into the sewer. There are two ways to cut down on the water used in the toilet-first, don't use it as often, and second, reduce the water per flush.

The toilet is not a trash can, and it should not be used to flush away tissue, gum wrappers, cigarette butts, spiders, diapers, or anything else that should go into the waste basket or garbage can. Each of us does this at some time, and it is a phenomenal waste of water.

Most toilets use more water than is necessary and can operate just as well using less. There are a variety of methods of reducing the flow, but most are variations of water displacement. This is the theory behind putting bricks in the toilet tank. However, we don't believe this is a good practice. Bricks may crack the tank with the extra weight and after a while the bricks may disintegrate and cause serious and expensive problems in your plumbing system.

An inexpensive, safe and easy method of displacement is to use plastic bottles, such as soap and laundry softener bottles. Fill them with water, weight them, and place them in the tank. Using bottles gives you better control over volume of water in the tank, and it doesn't cost you anything.

However, be sure you don't displace so much water in the toilet tank that you must flush it twice to get it to work each time. Double flushing wastes more water than you save. Also be sure that the plastic bottle doesn't interfere with the toilet mechanism. With the bottle you can adjust the volume of water so the toilet flushes efficiently but conserves water.

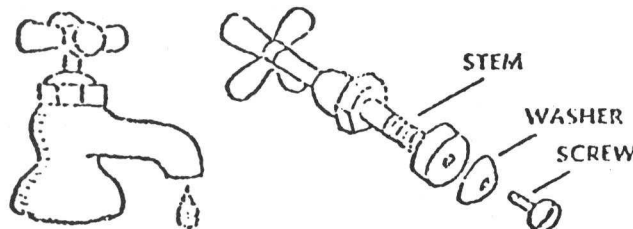
TIPS ON WATER CONSUMPTIONLeaks

Lots of water flows from little leaks. A deceptively small drip can waste 100 gallons a day, and more than 1,000 gallons a day can pour through a leak only one-sixteenth inch in size. And when a hot water tap is dripping, you are wasting energy also.

Most leaks, besides toilet leaks, are in faucets, and are most commonly the result of worn washers. It is a good idea to make a regular check of every tap in the house a couple of times a year to see if all the faucets are working properly. If water still drips after you have turned the faucet off firmly, take it apart as shown in the diagram and replace the old washer with a new one of the same size and style. It is important to get an exact replacement. The washer used should fit easily inside the "cup" and spread out to the edges when screwed down. If it still drips you might have a more difficult problem which would best be handled by a plumber.

Due to the large increase in water consumption, the following water conservation rules should be implemented by all customers to avoid a disruptive water shortage:

1. All outside lawn irrigation must be completed before 12:00 noon.
2. All outside irrigation of lawns and shrubs are to be watered no more than twice a week.
3. All hoses are to be equipped with automatic shut-off nozzles.
4. All car washing should be done with a bucket and sponge - not a full-flowing hose.
5. When a dishwasher is used, make sure it is filled to capacity before washing.
6. Garbage disposals are tremendous water wasters. Use the garbage can instead of garbage disposal.
7. Inspections of inside and outside plumbing fixtures should be completed and all leaks repaired. Remember, a dripping faucet can leak as much as 100 gallons in 24 hours. If you see a leaky faucet in a public restroom, ask the manager to have it fixed.
8. All washing of sidewalks, driveways, asphalt areas, store fronts, and any other areas that could be cleaned with a broom and dust pan is to be discontinued.
9. All exterior washing of mobile homes is to be discontinued.
10. All water leaks either property side or street side of the water meter should be reported to the Water Department as soon as possible.



Conserve Water in Your Garden

As much as 650 gallons of water or more will flow through a 5/8" garden hose in an hour. Remember that, whenever you use the hose outside your house. If you happen to forget and leave your hose running unattended, hundreds of gallons can be lost in a very short time.

When washing the car, use a bucket for the soapy water, and don't leave the hose running while you wash. A shut-off nozzle on the hose will help conserve water. Use the hose for rinsing car only.

Using a hose instead of a broom is wasteful also. It isn't the best use of water to shoot it down the gutter, so use a rake and broom and shovel to clean up outside debris. Sweep your sidewalks and driveways instead of using the garden hose. By the way, using a broom instead of a garden hose is not only a good way to conserve our much needed water supply but it is also good exercise.....

Remember, the water collected while waiting for tap water to run warm can easily be used to water house plants, potted plants, and small gardens.

When we are aware of the water we use, it becomes easier to conserve it. It shouldn't be hard to conserve water. It doesn't have to change our lives drastically, mostly it is common sense. It is easier to change our habits and reduce consumption now, before that day in the near future when there might not be any other choice, and when the change would be drastic. We want you to think about your water and how precious it is. When you do think about it, please don't waste it.

Remember, if we all work together as a team we can lick any problem. The problem now is - water - and how to make it last through the summer.