

# Conserving Oklahoma's Water

Because water is usually so plentiful, accessible, and inexpensive, we often casually disregard its importance and consider it a limitless resource. However, episodes of water shortages and drought are inevitable in Oklahoma. Innovative water management and water conservation are crucial for maintaining supplies and satisfying increasing demands. As Oklahoma citizens, it is incumbent upon each of us to be a steward of our water resources. Conservation is the most direct way we can demonstrate this stewardship.

## WATER CONSERVATION

### Outdoors

So please . . . Conserve your water resources!

#### WATER USE TIPS

- Water slowly and thoroughly, rather than frequently, to encourage root system growth and avoid runoff.
- Place sprinklers near the top of a slope to avoid runoff on sloping areas.
- Water during the early morning hours when temperatures and wind speed are relatively low.
- Position sprinklers to water the lawn, not the pavement.
- Avoid watering during high winds.
- Use a sprinkler that applies water as slowly as possible.
- Group landscape plants according to their water needs to avoid overwatering certain plants.
- Use and maintain the proper outdoor watering equipment.
- Use hose washers between spigots and water hoses to eliminate leaks; check connections regularly.
- Be familiar with the operation of your automatic sprinkler system and adjust it according to the season.
- Aerate lawns to allow water easier access to roots. Punch holes six inches apart.
- Fertilize lawns at least twice a year to stimulate root development, but do not overfertilize.
- Mow grass at a higher level, at least two to three inches, to reduce evaporation and root stress.
- Use a mulching mower that leaves grass clippings on the lawn.
- Use a soaker hose or drip irrigation system to water trees, gardens, and landscapes.
- Shape the soil around large plants and trees into earthen basins to catch and retain water.
- Water your lawn only when it really needs it (when the leaves begin to roll or show signs of wilt, when the grass does not spring back when stepped on, or when it appears dull or gray).
- Use a sprinkler that distributes large droplets on a low trajectory close to the ground and/or one that simulates a gentle rain, rather than a fine mist, which is more easily lost to evaporation.
- Condition soil with mulch or compost before planting to promote water penetration and retention in grass and flowerbeds.
- Replace turf and vegetation in seldom-used side and front yard areas with attractive rocks, gravel, wood chips, or other materials that require no water.

## WATER CONSERVATION

### Inside Your Home

#### WATER USE TIPS

- Check all water line connections and faucets for leaks, especially between the water meter and house.
- Learn to read your water meter and keep track of water bills so you can judge how much water you use.
- Insulate hot water pipes and the hot water heater itself to reduce time spent waiting for water to run hot.
- Turn off your electric water heater at the circuit breaker if you are going on vacation.
- Use the stopper in the sink or a pan of water to soak pots, pans, dishes, and cooking utensils.
- Use the sink garbage disposal sparingly by peeling/preparing vegetables or other foods on newspapers.
- Use a small pan of cold water when cleaning fruits and vegetables rather than using running water.
- Wash only full loads of laundry in your washing machine and use the lowest water level setting possible.
- Launder clothes in cold water as often as possible.
- Check the thermostat on your water heater to ensure it is not set too high.
- Locate your hot water heater as close as possible to the bathroom, kitchen, or laundry areas.
- Consider using two small water heaters placed in strategic locations rather than one large unit.
- Check the water requirements of various models/brands when shopping for new appliances that use water.
- Adapt plumbing with flow-restricting or other water-saving devices.
- Take a shower instead of a bath and limit showers to five minutes.
- Use sink stoppers to avoid wasting water when shaving and washing dishes.
- Turn off the faucet while brushing teeth and use a glass of water for rinsing.
- Find and fix leaks in toilets as soon as detected.
- Install low-volume flush toilets, most of which use only 1.6 gallons per flush.
- Do not use the toilet to flush away objects that should be thrown away.
- Turn water faucets off tightly after use.
- Thaw frozen foods by placing them in a pan of hot water.
- Use dishwashers only when they are full.

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WATER RESOURCES BOARD  
the water agency