

It's time to start conserving water!

CityPage

Winston-Salem

Central North Carolina is in its fourth year of drought. Water levels in lakes and reservoirs are down. The Yadkin River, which supplies most of Forsyth County's water, recently dropped to the lowest level ever recorded in the past 38 years.

We all need to start conserving water. The good news is, it's easy! Follow the tips on this page to see just how easy it is. Simply cutting back on the schedule for watering your lawn can make a huge difference - not only in your water usage, but in your water bill!

So, starting today, try to do one thing each day to save water. Don't worry if the savings are minimal.

When it comes to water, every drop counts!

Water-wise Dos & Don'ts

In the kitchen

- Do use water in a bowl to clean fruits & vegetables instead of washing them under running water. Faucets use 2-3 gallons of water a minute. Afterwards, use the water in the bowl to water your house plants.
- Do store drinking water in the refrigerator instead of running the tap to get cool water.
- Don't leave the water running when you wash dishes by hand.
- Do run the dishwasher only when it is full. Dishwashers use 8-12 gallons per load.
- Do fix a leaking faucet. A faucet dripping at the rate of one drop a second wastes 2,700 gallons a year. A constant drip can go through as much as 100 gallons a day!
- Don't defrost food under running water.
- Don't rinse plates before putting them in the dishwasher. Scrape them and let the machine do the rest.

Does your house have a water leak?

Undetected water leaks can add up. Here's an easy way to check your property for a water leak:
 Turn off all your faucets and taps and make sure the washing machine, dishwasher and ice maker are not going (along with any other appliance that uses water, such as a humidifier).
 Then go look at your water meter. (Most meters are under a metal plate near the street.) The meter's leak indicator (a small red & white dial) should not be turning. If it is turning, you've got a leak somewhere in your plumbing or in the water line leading into your house.

In the bathroom

- Do fill the bathtub only halfway and save 10-15 gallons. And stop up the tub before turning on the water. The initial burst of cold water will be warmed by hot water that flows in later.
- Do take shorter showers and save 5-10 gallons per minute.
- Do install water-saving showerheads that provide a vigorous spray while reducing water flow to 3-5 gallons per minute.
- Don't leave the water running while you brush your teeth or shave. Faucets use 2-3 gallons a minute.
- Do fill a plastic laundry or soap bottle and place it in the toilet tank. (Don't use bricks; they crumble and can cause plumbing problems!)
- Don't use your toilet as a waste basket.
- Do check your toilet for leaks: Put a small amount of food coloring in the tank and wait 30 minutes. If the water in the bowl is colored, replace the flapper inside the toilet tank. (Flush immediately after the test so the food coloring does not stain the bowl.)

Water Conservation Information Line
747-7358

Outdoors

- Don't wash your car at home, take it to a commercial car wash that recycles water.
- Do use a drip hose to water your flowers and vegetables.
- Don't water gardens or lawns in the heat of the day, when up to 90 percent of the water is lost through evaporation.
- Do replace hoses with leaks that waste water where it is not needed.
- Don't use a hose to clean sidewalks and driveways.
- Do mulch your flower and garden beds to reduce evaporation and weeds.
- Do adjust your sprinklers so they don't water the sidewalk and driveway.
- Do follow the water-wise tips on this page for watering your lawn! It's the single best way to conserve water!

Watering Your Lawn

When it comes to conserving water, nothing helps as much as reducing the frequency of watering your lawn. And you won't even notice the difference.

And did you know that wise lawn watering also helps to build a stronger, healthier lawn? Constant over-watering or frequent under-watering promotes shallow roots, which is a sure way to damage your lawn during times of stress. These stressful times for your lawn include not only the hot summer months, but also the cold winter months when there is really nothing you can do for an unhealthy lawn.

The healthiest lawns have the healthiest roots. The best watering practices moisten the soil 4-6 inches deep; this is the extent of the root zone, and requires only about 1 inch of water.

When to water your lawn

Water your lawn at the first signs of moisture stress. The easiest way to tell if moisture stress is present is to look for footprints on your lawn. When you can see footprints on your lawn (meaning your lawn doesn't spring back up after you have walked across it) water your lawn. Do not water again until you see footprints again. Water when the sun will cause the least evaporation. Watering in the early morning is best. The next best practice is to water in the evening, but do it early enough so the grass is not

wet overnight, which could enhance fungal growth. Other signs include: a bluish gray color, wilted, folded, or curled leaves.

How much water do I need to moisten the soil 4-6 inches deep?

One inch for clay soils. A half-inch for sandy soils.

How do I know when I've put out 1 inch of water?

This is easy! Put a few old cans out on the lawn next time you water. When they fill up 1 inch - you're done. Check how long that took. Next time you water just turn on the sprinklers for that amount of time.

Conserving water conserves your cash!

Follow the conservation tips on this page and watch the water bill of this family of four go down!

Action	Water Saved per month	Money Saved*
Reduce watering your lawn to every other day	7,500 gal.	\$10.78
Wash car with a bucket instead of a hose	100 gal.	.14
Fix a faucet that drips one drop per second	225 gal.	.32
Turn off the water while everyone brushes	1,440 gal.	2.07
Turn off the water while the father shaves	120 gal.	.17
Put a one-gal. jug in toilet water tanks	100 gal.	.14
Run dishwasher only when it's full, saving 15 cycles	150 gal.	.22
Run only full loads in washing machine, save 10 cycles	500 gal.	.72
Reduce showers to 5 minutes from 10	1,800 gal.	2.59
Wash food in a bowl instead of under running water	240 gal.	.34
Total savings per month	12,175 gal.	\$17.49

How much could YOU save?

* Based on the City/County Utility Commission in-city rate of \$1.075 for every 748 gallons. Non-city residents pay 50 percent more. Savings do not apply to customers paying the minimum monthly charge.

Winston-Salem • Forsyth County
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