



**Minnesota  
DNR Waters**

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## WATER USE HABITS

	<u>Typical Usage</u>	<u>Good, Water-Saving Habits</u>
SHOWERING	20-40 gallons ( <i>4 gallons per minute</i> )	5 gallons ( <i>wet down, soap up, rinse off</i> )
TUB BATHING	36 gallons	18 gallons ( <i>fill tub halfway or less</i> )
TOILET FLUSHING	3.5 to 4.5 gallons	1.6 gallons ( <i>standard for new toilets</i> )
TEETH BRUSHING	2+ gallons ( <i>faucet running</i> )	1 pint ( <i>wet brush, rinse briefly</i> )
SHAVING	3-5 gallons ( <i>faucet running</i> )	1 gallon ( <i>fill basin, rinse briefly</i> )
HAND DISH WASHING	20 gallons ( <i>faucet running</i> )	5 gallons ( <i>wash &amp; rinse in filled sink</i> )
AUTOMATIC DISHWASHER	14 gallons ( <i>full cycle</i> )	Do only full loads. Some new dishwashers can reduce water use by 30% to 50%.
WASHING MACHINE	51 gallons ( <i>full cycle</i> )	Do only full loads. New water-efficient washers use 50% less water.
OUTDOOR WATERING	5-10 gallons per minute	Be sensible. Water only when needed every 5 to 7 days.

# WAYS TO SAVE WATER

Water saving tips that can help save money on your water, sewer, and energy (water heater) bills...

## in the Bathroom...

- Toilets are one of the largest water users within a home. Consider replacing older (pre-1994) toilets with a new *1.6 gallon per flush* toilet and reduce water use per flush by 50%.
- Be alert for leaky toilets and faucets and repair leaks immediately. A slow drip wastes 15 to 20 gallons of water per day. A leaky toilet can waste hundreds of gallons a day.
- Check toilets for leaks by putting a few drops of food coloring in the tank. If the color appears in the bowl without flushing, there is a leak and repairs are needed.
- Install a new low-flow shower head and replace older shower heads (up to 10 gpm) with a new low-flow (2.5 gpm) shower head.
- Take shorter showers. Get wet, turn off the water, lather up, then turn on the water to rinse.
- Tub baths use more water than short showers. Conserve water by only partially filling the tub. Every inch in the tub equals approximately 5 gallons.
- Don't let the water run when you brush your teeth, wash your face & hands, or shave. Up to 7 gallons per minute goes straight down the drain when faucets are left running.

## in the Kitchen and Laundry...

- Avoid running the faucet for a glass of cold water. Put a bottle or pitcher of water in the refrigerator.
- Install low-flow aerators (2.5 gallons per minute) on kitchen and laundry faucets. Aerators can be screwed into existing faucets.
- When washing dishes by hand, never run water continuously. Fill a basin or use a stopper in the sink for rinse water.
- Operate automatic dishwashers and clothes washers only when they are fully loaded. Utilize the shortest cycle possible and minimize use of detergent.
- Automatic dishwashers use 7 to 14 gallons per load and clothes washers use 27 to 51 gallons per load. Consider water efficient models when buying a new dishwasher or clothes washer.

## Outdoors...

- Use a bucket to wash the car rather than a continuously-running hose.
- Water lawns and gardens only as needed. Buy a rain gauge and use it to determine how much rain your yard has received. A good rain can eliminate the need to water for up to two weeks.
- Water lawns only during the early morning when evaporation is lower and water as infrequently as possible to encourage deep-rooting to make turf more drought tolerant.
- Water lawns slowly so that the ground can absorb the water. When water starts to run off the yard to the gutter, stop watering. Avoid watering on windy days and don't allow sprinklers to water the street, driveway, sidewalk or alley.
- Cut grass at a three inch height and allow grass to grow taller in hot weather to reduce the amount of water needed. Fertilizing increases the need for water; avoid over-fertilizing.
- Automatic sprinkler systems with set schedules use up to 47% more water than non-automated systems. Water only when necessary and adjust watering times accordingly (longer when it is hot, less when it is cool and humid, and not at all when it rains).
- Consider alternatives to big, thirsty lawns. Establish landscapes or garden areas with native and other plants or rock gardens that don't need as much water.