



Home water-saving tips

Water is a precious resource that we can't afford to waste. We can each make a real difference simply by changing a few of our everyday water use habits. Use these practical tips and ideas to help you save water in and around your home.

IN THE BATHROOM

About 35% of the water used inside your home is used in the bathroom, and another 32% in the toilet.

- Try turning the tap off when brushing your teeth. If you brush your teeth for two minutes, and leave the tap running, you could be wasting up to 10 litres of water each time you brush.
- When shaving, use a plug in the basin, instead of letting the tap run.
- Every minute you cut from your shower time could save up to 9 litres of water if you have a water-efficient showerhead, and up to 20 litres if you have an older style, conventional showerhead.
- Installing a 3-star water-efficient showerhead will still give you a great shower and you'll save water and money, and help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- If you have a dual flush toilet, use the half flush option when possible.
- If you have a single flush toilet, a displacement device in the cistern (tank) can save you one litre of water every flush.

Remove the lid of your cistern and carefully place a one litre plastic bottle filled with pebbles and water into the cistern, safely away from the operating mechanism.

- Check for toilet leaks. A slow, barely visible leak into your toilet bowl can waste more than 4,000 litres of water a year. Visible, constant leaks (with a hissing sound) can waste 95,000 litres a year.

Place a few drops of biodegradable food colouring into the cistern, and wait for 30 minutes. If you have a leaking toilet, you will see coloured water in the toilet bowl, and it's time to call a plumber. Flush immediately after this test so that you don't stain the bowl.

IN THE LAUNDRY

About 23% of the water used inside your home is used in the laundry. Conventional top loading washing machines use an average of 120 to 150 litres of water each load.

- Only use your washing machine when you have a full load.
- Adjust the water level to suit the size of your load and use the economy cycle, if your machine has one.
- If you are buying a new washing machine, consider choosing a 4-star water-efficient model. These use about two-thirds less water than a traditional top loader.

IN THE KITCHEN

About 10% of the water used inside your home is used in the kitchen. A running kitchen tap can use around 9 litres of water a minute.

- Instead of running water to wash vegetables or rinse dishes, put a plug in the sink or use a bowl.
- Each time you use the dishwasher, you could be using between 12 and 40 litres of water — depending on the water efficiency and size of your dishwasher.

- Use your dishwasher only when you have a full load and use the economy cycle.
- If you are buying a new dishwasher, choose a 4-star water-efficient model.

DRIPPING TAPS AND LEAKS

A dripping tap can waste more than 2,000 litres of water a month. That's 24,000 litres a year.

- Turn taps off firmly, but avoid excessive force that may damage the tap washer and cause the tap to leak.
- Fixing leaking taps may be as simple as changing a tap washer. Your hardware store can advise how to do this, or you can seek assistance from a plumber.
- Check for leaks by reading your water meter before you go to bed, then again in the morning. If you have not used any water overnight, and the reading has changed, then you have a leak. Seek advice from a plumber. The ActewAGL website (www.actewagl.com.au) has information on how to read your water meter.

IN THE GARDEN

On average, about 43% of all the water used by a household is used in the garden and for other outdoor use.

- Observe Permanent Water Conservation Measures and any temporary water restrictions when using water outside your home.
- Adjust your garden and lawn watering patterns to account for weather conditions and plant needs.
- Check the four-day weather forecast with the Bureau of Meteorology (www.bom.gov.au) If there is rain ahead, let the rain do your watering for you.
- Use a rake or broom to clean paths and the driveway.
- Consider installing a drip irrigation system.
- Use a bucket for washing and rinsing your car.

- Mulch your garden to reduce evaporation, weed growth and water run-off. 75mm is an ideal mulch depth.
- Choose plants that require less water and consider reducing your area of lawn.
- Check the Xeriscape garden principles on the ActewAGL website: www.actewagl.com.au
- Sign up for a free ACT Government GardenSmart service. Call 13 2281.
- Book into an ACTEW Corporation Waterwise Gardening Workshop. For dates call 6248 3131.

WATER EFFICIENCY INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

You may wish to consider the home and garden water efficiency programs offered as part of the ACT Government's water strategy, *Think water, act water*.

Details of all ACT Government water efficiency incentive programs are available from www.thinkwater.act.gov.au

MORE INFORMATION

For more information on water issues, water efficiency rebates and *Think water, act water* initiatives:

Ph: 13 22 81

Email: WaterResources@act.gov.au

Website: www.thinkwater.act.gov.au

For more information on Permanent Water Conservation Measures or other temporary water restrictions, call the ACTEW Water Conservation Office on 6248 3131, or visit www.actew.com.au

For more information on Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards, visit www.waterrating.gov.au