

Water Conservation Tips

Our water is a valuable resource that our community should work together to actively conserve. The City of Bismarck provides convenient access to clean, safe, potable water with an extensive network of collection, treatment, and distribution infrastructure. By conserving water in homes and businesses, our community members can help ensure that we are getting the most efficient and responsible use from our water resources and infrastructure.

Water Consumption per Household is Driven by Several Factors:

- The number of residents in the household, and their water usage patterns.
- Seasonal usage such as irrigation of lawns or gardens, filling pools, or other additional usage on outdoor faucets.
- Oftentimes an unexplained increase in water usage is caused by leaky plumbing - toilets, sinks, outside sprinklers, washers, hot water heaters, etc.
- Toilet leaks are quite common and can be hard to detect by sight or sound. **A leaky toilet can use anywhere from 5,385 gallons of water per month from what would be considered a slow leak, to over 8,400 gallons of water per day.**

Average Water Consumption Amounts: High Efficiency Fixtures and Appliances Can Make a Big Difference in Daily Usage!

	Low Efficiency	High Efficiency
Bath	36 gallons (full tub)	N/A
Shower (10-15 min)	50-150 gallons (5-10 gal/min)	20-30 gallons (2 gal/min)
Toilet Flush	3-7 gallons per flush	1-3 gallons per flush
Dish washing by hand (10 min/day)	30-50 gallons (3-5 gal/min)	20 gallons (2 gal/min)
Automatic Dishwasher	12-16 gallons per cycle	6 gallons per cycle
Clothes Washer	30-60 gallons per load	6-25 gallons per load

More Conservation Tips and Information:

Bathrooms

- Two thirds of the water used in an average home is used in a bathroom, most of which goes through the wastewater system as well.
- An average of 2-7 gallons of water are used each time a toilet is flushed.
- Do not use the toilet to flush items that can go in a wastebasket.
- Be aware of toilet leaks! **A major toilet leak can waste from 300-400 gallons of water per hour.**
- Long showers (over 20 minutes) can use a great deal of water. Consider using reduced-flow devices for showerheads.
- Don't leave the water running while you shave or brush your teeth. Instead, help conserve water by turning the water off when you aren't actively using it.

Kitchens

- Reduce water waste by making sure your dishwasher is full each time you run it.
- It isn't always necessary to rinse dishes before putting them in the dishwasher, especially with newer, more efficient models.
- If you wash dishes by hand, conserve water by only running water while filling the sink or rinsing the dishes.
- The same advice goes for cleaning vegetables or other foods: Only run water while you are using it, and turn off the faucet when you are not.
- Store a container of drinking water in the refrigerator for readily available cold water, instead of letting the faucet run until the water is cold.

Laundry

- Make sure that each load of laundry is full.
- If you have a less than full load, be sure to set the load size and cycle to what is most appropriate for the laundry you are washing, and check the setting before each load of laundry.
- Use cold water for washing and rinsing as much as possible, and try to skip the extra or second rinse cycle.
- Re-use bath and dish towels a few times before washing them.

Outdoors

- Wait to water lawns and gardens if rain is in the forecast-Mother Nature might take care of it for you.
- To avoid losing water that you want to go on your lawns and gardens, don't water when it is windy.
- Water grass and plants when they show signs of needing moisture, not necessarily on a fixed schedule.
- Use native plants and grasses for landscaping and yards, as they will be more suited to our region, and more drought-tolerant as well.
- Water during the coolest part of the days, evenings, or at night, to avoid excess evaporation.
- As much as 50% of outdoor water use is wasted from inefficient watering systems and methods, make sure your system is well-maintained and your watering habits are mindful of water conservation.
- When washing your vehicle, use a bucket for washing and only run the hose while rinsing.

Plumbing

- Install aerators on household faucets to help conserve water.
- Routinely monitor your home for water leaks, both large and small, indoors and outdoors.
- Make sure you know where your main shutoff valve in the home is, and exercise the valve periodically to make sure it is in good working order.