



26 Ways to Save Water & Money



NOTHING CAN REPLACE IT

DUNCANVILLE WATER UTILITIES

Water – with the turn of a handle, we get as much as we want, whenever we want it. So it's easy to forget that water is a carefully prepared product that must be purchased like any other. And whether it's used efficiently or wasted, we pay for every drop of water that flows through our meter.

But wasting water has another environmental impact - the additional energy required to treat and pump water into our homes. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that if one percent of American homes switched to water-efficient fixtures, we could save about 100 million kWh of electricity per year and avoid 80,000 tons of greenhouse gas emissions. That is equivalent to removing nearly 15,000 automobiles from our roads for a year.

We can't control the amount of water we truly need, but we can control how much we waste. There are many ways to use water efficiently by making a few simple changes in how we use it.

By using the tips in this brochure you'll help preserve a valuable resource and you'll save hundreds or even thousands of gallons of water a year. And those gallons add up to energy and money saved!



1 *Consider replacing your old toilet with a new high-efficiency toilet (HET).*

Did you know that in most homes, toilets use more water than anything else indoors? Toilets installed before 1992 use between 3 and 7 gallons per flush. The new HETs use 1.28 gallons per flush, saving an average of 4,200 gallons per person per year!

2 *Check for and repair toilet leaks.* Toilets are notorious for their leaks, sometimes wasting as much as 200 gallons of water a day. Put a few drops of food coloring in your toilet tank. If the bowl shows traces of food coloring 10 or 15 minutes later (without flushing), you have a leak. Toilet flapper valves should be checked at least once a year. Replacing a flapper valve is very simple, however, it is very important that the valve is the correct replacement size for your toilet. The wrong size valve can significantly reduce a toilet's efficiency.

3 *Don't use the toilet as a wastebasket.* Every time you flush the toilet to dispose of cigarette butts, tissues, bugs or bits of trash, you are wasting water.

4 *Repair leaking faucets and shower heads.* A drip rate of one drip per second can waste more than 3,000 gallons per year. Simply replacing a washer can stop most dripping faucets.

5 *Take shorter showers.* At five to 10 gallons a minute, a 10-minute shower can use as much as 100 gallons of water. Try to gradually shorten your showers by 1 minute. Aim to limit your shower time to 5 minutes or less.



6 *Install water-saving showerheads.*

Look for low-flow showerheads that use two gallons per minute or less. These inexpensive, easy-to-install showerheads can reduce water use by more than 50 percent and still provide an invigorating shower. In addition to reducing your water bill, you'll save on energy costs from your water heater as well.

7 *Turn off the water while brushing your teeth or shaving.* Up to five gallons of water a minute goes down the drain when taps are left running. Instead, wet your toothbrush, then fill a glass with the water you need for rinsing. And when shaving, collect a small amount of warm water in the sink and rinse your razor there instead of under a running faucet.

8 *Install faucet aerators.* Aerators are inexpensive and can reduce the amount of water used by up to 50 percent. It's estimated that faucets use 10 gallons per person per day, so an aerator could save 1,825 gallons per year per person.

9 *Wash only full loads in your washing machine and dishwasher.* Older model, top-loading clothes washers use 30 to 40 gallons of water for each load of laundry. If you must wash just a few things, be sure to use the setting for smaller loads. The average dishwasher uses about 15 gallons of water each time they are run.

10 *Consider an appliance upgrade.* Replace your old clothes washer with a new high-efficiency model. These washers only use 12 to 15 gallons per load and extract more water from your wet laundry, which also saves energy costs in the dryer.

11 *Never pour grease or oil down a drain.* Besides potentially clogging the drain, you'll use a great deal of water trying to wash the grease out of the pipes. Pouring grease down the drain can also cause a sewer problem for you and your neighbors.



12 *Plant native or adapted plants.* These plants love our Texas heat and can thrive with little or no supplemental water once established. In addition to being Texas tough, they are beautiful! Visit SaveDallasWater.com to learn more about native and adapted plants. Also consider going on our annual Water-Wise Landscape Tour the first Saturday of June or attending one of our free Water-Wise Landscape Seminars.

13 *Use mulch to conserve water and slow weed growth.* Mulch will protect the soil from heat and the sun and will also help retain the water you give your landscape. Organic mulch (such as shredded cypress or cedar, composted leaves, shredded landscape clippings, etc.) will also break down to become compost which provides nourishment for your plants.

14 *Water your lawn efficiently.* Water **deeply and infrequently** to help your lawn develop a deep and healthy root system. Turf with a shallow root system is much more susceptible to diseases, pests, freezing and drought. Lawns with deep roots are much healthier and require less water.

15 *Water only when your lawn begins to show signs of stress.* Look for faint discoloration, wilting or footprints that remain visible after someone has walked across it. Most people significantly over-water their landscapes. Depending on soil conditions, one to one-and-a-half inches of water per week is all most Texas grasses need during peak growing season.

16 *Hand water in areas that need more frequent watering.* Group plants that need more water together in order to target those that need it. Hand watering is also the most efficient way to water plants near walks or driveways or in especially hot, sunny spots.

17 *Use practical turf areas.* Grass usually needs more water than any other part of the landscape. Think about how you will use the area to determine if grass is the best choice. In some cases ground covers, shrubs, a deck or a patio may work better.



18 *Observe the maximum twice per week watering schedule.* The City of Duncanville Water Conservation Ordinance allows watering with automatic or hose-end sprinklers no more than twice weekly, with a watering schedule determined by street address. Duncanville residents can water according to the following schedule:

If address ends:	Water on these days of the month:
0 or 5	5, 10, 15, 20, 25, and 30
1 or 6	1, 6, 11, 16, 21, and 26
2 or 7	2, 7, 12, 17, 22, and 27
3 or 8	3, 8, 13, 18, 23, and 28
4 or 9	4, 9, 14, 19, 24, and 29

Handwatering, soaker hoses, and drip irrigation will be permitted on any day at any time.

19 *Use sprinklers that throw big drops of water close to the ground.* Some sprinklers, especially those that throw mist or small droplets of water high in the air, lose as much as 50 percent to evaporation and wind.

20 *Water lawns, gardens and landscapes early in the morning when evaporation rates are at their lowest.* Watering during the heat of the day can lose 40 to 60 percent of the water due to evaporation. And remember that the Duncanville City Ordinance prohibits watering with sprinklers between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. from April 1 to October 31.

21 *Keep an eye on your automatic sprinkler system.* Be sure that all the sprinkler heads are in good working order and that your system has no leaks. Schedule an automatic irrigation system checkup. A licensed irrigator can recommend an efficient watering schedule for your particular situation, as well as help find leaks and any other system problems. You may not end up implementing their recommendations, but by doing so, you could save hundreds of dollars on your water bill.

22 *Remember to adjust outdoor watering for seasonal needs.* In late fall and winter most plants have stopped actively growing, so watering needs are significantly lower. Most plants just need about one inch of water per month, so with normal rainfall many landscapes need no supplemental watering.



23 *Use a broom, not a hose, to clean driveways and sidewalks.* You'll save water and get a little exercise too.

24 *Use a soaker hose or drip irrigation for shrubs, trees and flower beds.* Soaker hoses and drip irrigation put the water into the soil instead of on the leaves and in the air.

25 *Don't water streets, sidewalks or driveways.* This wasteful practice also violates the Duncanville Ordinance. Be sure to place your sprinklers carefully and watch for run-off. Some of our dense soils may not be able to absorb all the water they need in one application.

26 *Use a spray nozzle with an automatic shut-off to wash your car or bathe your pets.* A continuously running hose can dispense up to 75 gallons of water in just 15 minutes.



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