



WaterSense Products

If you are considering a new product that utilizes water, look for those with the WaterSense label. They have undergone independent testing and certification to meet EPA WaterSense criteria for efficiency and performance. The average household could save approximately \$170 per year by making simple changes to use water more efficiently. Installation of water-efficient products throughout the U.S. would save more than 3 trillion gallons of water per year, an equivalent of \$18 billion dollars.

Low-Volume Showerheads

Installing a low-volume showerhead is an easy and inexpensive way to reduce the amount of water you use every day. Normal showerheads can dispense 5 to 10 gallons of water per minute! Low-volume showerheads can reduce water use in the shower by %50. Reducing your time in the shower, or turning off the water while you soap up will also dramatically reduce water use.



Front-Loading Washers

These washers use half as much water as a standard top-loading washer. Because they use less water, they also use 60% less energy to heat the water. They can also hold more and are easier on your clothes. Savings while using a front-loading washing machine can top \$100 per year. To increase savings, only wash clothes when you have enough for a full load.

Low-Volume Dual Flush Toilets

Standard toilets use between 3 and 5 gallons of water per flush. Low-volume toilets only use 1 to 2 gallons. This will cut indoor water use by about 30%. A dual flush toilet allows you to choose between a high and low volume flush. You can reduce the amount of water used by a standard toilet if you sink a couple plastic bottles full of sand and water in the tank.

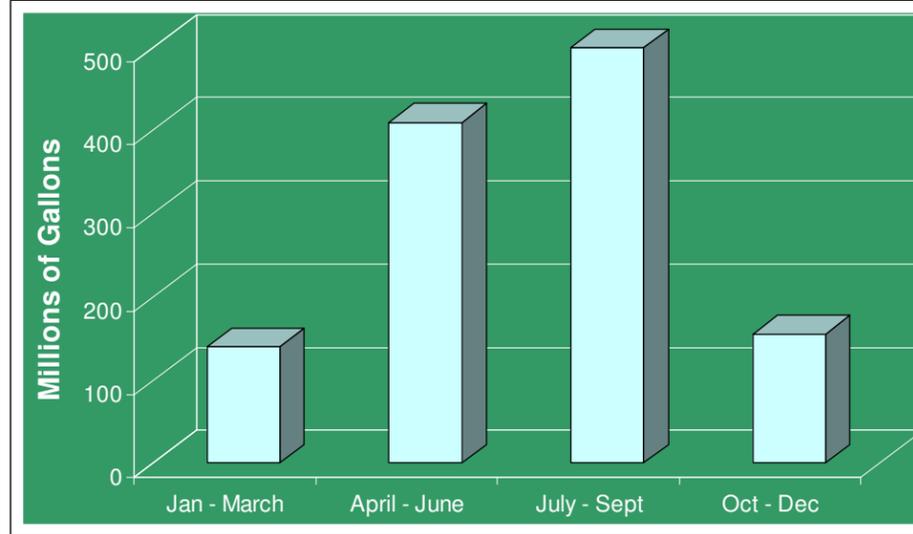


Faucet Aerators

Aerators are the easiest, and least expensive way to reduce home water use. They come in a variety of styles to fit the needs of your kitchen and bathrooms. They are easy to install and most cost less than \$6.



2007 Water Use for an Average Suburban Community



The graph above depicts water use for an average suburban community throughout the year. During the non-growing season (October—March), an average of 40 million gallons is used per month. During the growing season (April—September), that amount nearly quadruples to 150 million gallons per month. The majority of the difference between these two numbers is outdoor water use for lawn and garden irrigation, as well as washing cars and maintaining swimming pools. This large increase in water use puts tremendous pressure on groundwater reserves.

When watering your lawn or washing your car, it is important to remember that you are using the same pure drinkable water that comes out of your sink. Finding ways to reduce water use is an easy step we all should take to help conserve this important resource.

Metro Conservation Districts

Anoka Conservation District
1318 McKay Dr. NE, Suite 300
Ham Lake, MN 55304
763-434-2030
www.anokaswcd.org

Ramsey Conservation District
1425 Paul Kirkwold Dr.
Arden Hills, MN 55112
651-266-7270
www.co.ramsey.mn.us/cd/index.htm

Carver Soil & Water Conservation District
11360 Highway 212 Suite 6
Cologne, MN 55322
952-466-5230
www.co.carver.mn.us/departments/LWS/swcd.asp

Scott Soil and Water Conservation District
7151 West 190th St., Suite 125
Jordan, MN 55352
952-492-5425
www.scottswcd.org

Chisago Soil & Water Conservation District
38814 Third Ave.
North Branch, MN 55056
651-674-2333
www.chisagoswcd.org

Sherburne Soil & Water Conservation District
14855 Highway 10
Elk River, MN 55330
763-241-1170 Ext. 3
www.sherburneswcd.org/index.html

Dakota County Soil & Water Conservation District
4100 220th St. West, Suite 102
Farmington, MN 55024
651-480-7777
www.dakotaswcd.org

Washington Conservation District
1380 West Frontage Road, Hwy. 36
Stillwater, MN 55082
651-275-1136
www.mnwcd.org

Hennepin Conservation District
417 North 5th St., Suite 200
Minneapolis, MN 55401
612-348-9938
www.hcd.hennepin.mn.us

Wright Soil and Water Conservation District
311 Brighton Ave. South, Suite C
Buffalo, MN 55313
763-682-1970
www.wrightswcd.org

Isanti Conservation District
380 South Garfield St.
Cambridge, MN 55008
763-689-3224
www.isantiswcd.org



WATER-SMART

Conserving Water at Home



Metro Conservation Districts

A partnership between the eleven soil and water conservation districts of Anoka, Carver, Chisago, Dakota, Hennepin, Isanti, Ramsey, Scott, Sherburne, Washington and Wright Counties.

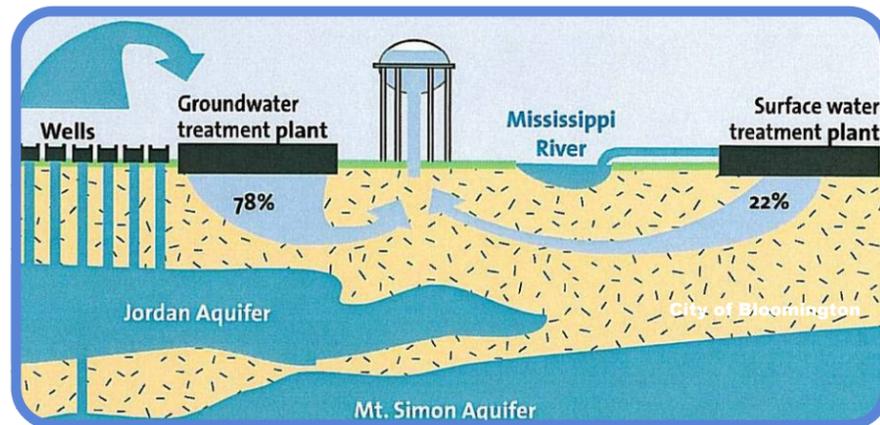
Prepared by the





Where Our Water Comes From

Household water can come from a variety of places including private wells, municipal wells, and treatment plants that take water from local rivers. The majority of our water is taken from aquifers located deep beneath the ground. Aquifers near the surface have their water supply “recharged” relatively quickly through infiltration, while deeper aquifers take much longer. Some of the water pumped by city wells was from glacial melt 10,000 years ago and once it is used up, it won’t be recharged in our lifetimes. Water from these reserves is very clean and requires very little treatment to make it safe to drink.



The average suburban home will use over 40,000 gallons of water each year for lawn irrigation. That’s about one third of the total annual household water use! Saving this water for drinking instead of growing grass will help maintain our drinking water supplies.



Runoff

We all value clean lakes and rivers for recreation and clean abundant water for drinking and other household uses. What we do at home can greatly influence the quality and quantity of these resources.

In a one-inch rainfall, a 1/4 acre lot can produce over 5,000 gallons of water from roofs, sidewalks, driveways and even the lawn itself. Grass clippings, leaf litter, soil, fertilizer and other pollutants are all washed off the lot and eventually flow into a storm drain. Water that enters storm drains goes untreated into lakes, streams or ponds. This can severely affect natural systems and water quality by introducing pollutants and excess nutrients.

Runoff can cause a variety of problems for local waterbodies. It transports sediment that reduces the quality of habitat and smothers aquatic life. It carries heavy metals and chemicals that make the water unsafe for human use. Excess phosphorus from grass clippings, leaf litter and some fertilizers are washed into lakes causing algae blooms. Excess algae competes with native aquatic vegetation. Eventually, decomposition of algae will decrease the amount of dissolved oxygen in the water which can result in a fish kill. To prevent these problems, water quality improvement and volume reduction efforts need to be made by everyone, not just the people living near a water source.



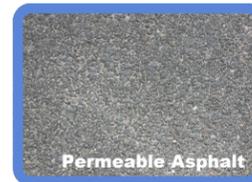
Water-Smart Surfaces



Permeable Pavement Driveway



Permeable Pavers



Permeable Asphalt

Driveways, sidewalks, patios and roofs all produce runoff during a rain storm. However, there are ways of maintaining a hard surface area while also allowing water to soak in. Permeable pavers lock together to create a solid surface but have gaps between the pavers that allow water to soak through. The gaps can be filled with gravel or even seeded to allow small plants to grow! They are great for driveways, sidewalks or patios.

Permeable asphalt is another hard surface that will allow water to soak into the ground instead of flowing into a storm drain. It is extremely durable, can be plowed in the winter and will reduce ice buildup because water will not sit at the surface.



Yard Maintenance Tips

With proper maintenance, you can keep your lawn healthy through the hottest part of the summer while also reducing your water use.

- ◆ Water thoroughly, but infrequently to encourage deeper root growth.
- ◆ Install a rain shut-off device to prevent watering during rain events.
- ◆ Repair leaking sprinklers, and adjust sprinklers to prevent spraying water on driveways or the street.
- ◆ Water in the morning to reduce water lost to evaporation.
- ◆ Mow your grass no shorter than 3” for deeper roots and fewer weeds.
- ◆ Use low-maintenance grasses like fine-leaved fescues and drought-resistant types of Kentucky bluegrass in newly seeded areas
- ◆ Let your lawn go dormant during the hottest months. Water 1/4” inch every two weeks (minus rainfall) to keep the crowns healthy.
- ◆ Mulch around trees, shrubs and in your garden. It will keep moisture in the soil and reduce weed growth.
- ◆ Use a plug aerator to improve water infiltration, making a healthier lawn and reducing runoff.
- ◆ Utilize drip-irrigation in gardens to apply water directly where it is needed and minimize losses to evaporation.



Water-Smart Landscaping

There are many ways to landscape your yard that will reduce runoff and water use. Many of them relate to the fact that traditional turf grass is not adapted to live in our climate and requires a lot of water to keep it alive. By limiting turf grass on your property to the areas of active use you can dramatically reduce your watering needs.

- ◆ Convert an area of lawn or existing garden to “xeriscaping”, a form of landscaping that uses drought tolerant plants.
- ◆ Replace high-maintenance grass with low-maintenance trees and shrubs. They provide shade that will reduce the amount of water needed to keep your lawn healthy and have deep roots that promote infiltration.
- ◆ Install a water-free landscape feature like a rock garden.

Consider natural landscaping for the rest of your yard. Natural Landscaping is the use of native vegetation that is well adapted to the soil, moisture and sunlight conditions of the property, greatly reducing long term maintenance. Natural landscapes have many other benefits as well.

- ◆ Provide a variety of habitats for insects, birds, reptiles and mammals.
- ◆ Once established they require very little maintenance, resist disease, and easily survive drought due to deep root structures; saving on water, fertilizers and pesticides.
- ◆ They can be designed to look natural or formal depending on your preference.
- ◆ You can use natural landscaping to create a rain garden that will capture runoff and allow it to soak into the ground instead of flowing into a nearby water body.

To further reduce water use and runoff from your property ;

- ◆ Recycle rainwater with a rain barrel. Rain barrels capture rainwater from your gutters and store it so you can use it later to water your plants.
- ◆ Direct downspouts into your yard instead of onto your sidewalk or driveway.



Native Planting



Rock Garden



Rain Garden



Rain barrel