



Quinte  
CONSERVATION

# Conserving Water



## Why Conserve Water?

In some areas of Ontario, we use fresh water faster than it can naturally be replenished. This can lead to long-term water shortages. Water conservation practices can save thousands of litres of water per person per year. Saving water is in the best interest of you, your family, the environment and the community - for today and for the future.

With simple changes to current home and business practices we can reduce water consumption by 40% or more. The best way to conserve water is to be aware of how you are using it.

## Water Use

The average Canadian household uses over 500,000 litres of water per year, with some estimates showing at least 50% of water use

is unnecessary and wasteful. The average person in Ontario uses 285 litres of water a day. In the summer months, 50% of household water is used in the lawn and garden.

The greatest water uses in an average home are:

- toilet (45%)
- showers (30%)
- laundry (20%)
- drinking and cooking (5%)

## Saving Water Outdoors

- Only water your lawn if it needs it; if it springs back when you step on it, it does not need watering
- Cut grass to a higher level (5 - 8 cm) to reduce evaporation
- Water vegetable gardens in the morning, near the roots, and by hand



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**For more information**  
**[www.quinteconservation.ca](http://www.quinteconservation.ca)**  
**(613) 968-3434 or (613) 354-3312**

**Administration Office**  
**2061 Old Hwy. 2, RR # 2**  
**Belleville, ON**  
**K8N 4Z2**



- Do not let children play in running water - consider buying a kiddie pool or water toys
- Use a pool cover on your pool when not in use to reduce evaporation
- Install rain barrels on the gutter downspouts to catch storm water and use it to water your flower and vegetable gardens or wash the car
- Increase water retention in soil by adding compost or peat and mulching around trees and shrubs to retain moisture
- Only water shrubs and trees once a week if there is no natural rainfall
- Use native grasses and plants in your garden as they require less water
- Pull planters into the shade to avoid the hot afternoon sun
- Plant shade trees to shelter your home and garden from hot sun
- Improve your soil with compost and autumn leaves so it's more nutritious and holds water better
- Set sprinklers to water the lawn, not sidewalks and driveways
- Install a shut-off valve on your hose so it only runs when in use
- Wash the car near your garden or lawn to water your plants at the same time
- Check your sprinkler or irrigation systems regularly for any leaks and fix them
- Wash cars for safety only, (windshield, windows and headlights) using a bucket
- Wash pets outdoors in an area of the yard that needs water
- Use a broom, not a hose to clean off your driveway

## Saving Water in the Kitchen

- Install a low-flow faucet aerator - this will reduce water flow by 25-50%
- Soak dishes in soapy water before washing by hand
- When washing dishes, use the least amount of detergent possible - this minimizes rinse water needed
- Fill a bowl with water to wash fruits and vegetables
- Wash only full dishwasher loads
- Load dishes into the dishwasher without rinsing
- Keep a pitcher of water in the fridge rather than running tap water until it is cool enough to drink
- Insulate pipes carrying hot water
- Do not use running water to thaw meat or other frozen foods - defrost food overnight in the refrigerator or by using the defrost setting on your microwave
- Use the right size pot for the job - an oversized pot means more water being heated and more energy being used to do it

## Saving Water in the Bathroom

- Turn the tap water off while brushing your teeth, shaving or washing your face
- Install a low-flow shower head
- Use the minimum amount of water needed for a bath by closing the drain and only filling the tub one-third full
- Check the toilet for leaks: add blue food colouring to the tank and wait 15 minutes, if the bowl is blue, there is a leak
- Install low-flow toilets as they account for 45% of indoor water use
- If the toilet flush handle frequently sticks in the flush position, letting water run constantly, replace or adjust it
- When waiting for the shower water to warm up, collect the cold water that precedes the hot in a large bucket then use this water for watering plants or other uses
- Don't flush things down the toilet to dispose of them - throw tissues and other bathroom waste in the garbage can