

Ontario Water Treatment Plant staff are responsible for treating the city's drinking water supply and must reliably produce high-quality water in adequate volume to meet city needs. There are two sources of water for our more than 11,000 residents; 80 percent of our water comes from the Snake River and 20 percent comes from six wells. As our water source is reliant on the Snake River, and river levels are down, saving water is critical to ensure our residents receive clean and safe drinking water in the future.

Tips on how to conserve water, our most precious resource

The average American family uses approximately 400 gallons of water per day, but have you ever considered how much of that is wasted? Nearly 180 gallons of water is wasted daily due to leaks, overuse and other waste activities.

The demand for water, the world's most valuable resource, continues to grow, and our community should be more aware of the consequences our lifestyle has on it. The City of Ontario is committed to encouraging water conservation throughout the city.

Below are some tips to conserve water. Making these small, low-cost changes in your daily life can make a difference for your wallet and the environment.

In the home

- **Bathroom**

- While brushing your teeth, remember to turn off the faucet until you are ready to rinse your toothbrush. This simple task can save 2 to 3 gallons of water a day.
- When washing your hands, turn off the water while you lather your hands together.
- Take shorter showers and avoid soaking in the tub. A five-minute shower uses only 4 to 5 gallons of water compared to 50 gallons for a bath.
- Install a low-flow showerhead, which restricts water flow up to 3 gallons a minute.
- Standard toilets can use as much as 7 gallons of water per flush. Replace with modern low water-use toilets to reduce water use.
- Regularly check your toilet and faucet for leaks and repairs or replace with a more efficient model. This change can save up to 1,000 gallons of water per month.
- Waiting for your water to warm up? Collect it in a bucket and use for activities like watering your plants and cleaning dishes.

- **Kitchen**

- Use a dishwasher, if possible, and don't rinse dishes prior to loading them. Dishwashers are better at conserving water than washing dishes by hand. Only run your dishwasher after it is completely full.
- Refrain from using water to defrost frozen food or meats. Instead, put them in the fridge to defrost.

- Store drinking water in your fridge to get cool rather than running the faucet until the water is cold.
- **Laundry room**
 - Wash only full loads of laundry or use the appropriate load size on the washing machine.
 - Consider purchasing a high efficiency, front-loading washing machine. A front-loading washing machine can result in a 40 to 75 percent reduction in water usage.

Outside the home

- Plant drought-resistant plants or trees that are native to your area during the summer months, and lay mulch around plants and trees to reduce evaporation of water.
- Use a broom, rather than a hose, to clean sidewalks, patios and driveways.
- Avoid watering your lawn daily as well as during the hottest part of the day.
- Consider installing a rain collection barrel to water your plants.
- Keep your soil healthy to help minimize runoff, retain water and absorb excess nutrients. You can order soil test kits and seek advice from a local nursery or horticulturist.
- Raise your lawn mower blade. The longer grass will promote a deeper root growth, resulting in a more drought resistant lawn.
- Minimize the use of fertilizer, which encourages new growth and requires additional water. If you must use fertilizer, use a product that contains slow-release ingredients to reduce nutrient run-off into water.
- Look for leaks in your irrigation system to keep the system well maintained and save water.

Local businesses and commercial facilities

- Develop a written plan for how your employees can save water and educate them and your contractors about the importance of water conservation.
- Perform a leak survey on the facility. Watch the meter after hours or on the weekends to see if there is constant flow, which could indicate a leak. Larger, more complex facilities may need sub-metering.
- If you have a boiler, inspect and maintain it regularly. Install a condensate return line on the boiler if it does not already have one.
- If you operate a restaurant, consider replacing your cube ice machine with a more efficient flake or nugget machine, which can save up to 38,000 gallons per year.

Additional water conservation educational opportunities

Interested in having a subject matter expert speak about the importance of water conservation at an upcoming community or school event? Contact Public Works at (541) 889-8572.