



Dear friend,  
New Yorkers depend on fresh, clean water for drinking, agriculture, industry and

recreation. Unfortunately, it's easy to take a safe and plentiful water supply for granted.

Water conservation — using water efficiently and avoiding waste — is an essential part of protecting our water supply. This brochure offers simple ways to conserve water at home, whether you rent or own.

I hope this information is helpful. Please contact my office if I can assist you further with this or any other matter.

Carl E. Heastie  
Speaker of the Assembly

**District Office:**  
250 Broadway, Suite 2301  
New York, NY 10007  
212-312-1400

**Albany Office:**  
932 Legislative Office Building  
Albany, NY 12248  
518-455-3791  
speaker@nyassembly.gov

Updated 4/23

# 8

## Easy ways to conserve water at home

Saving you money and protecting our precious water supply



A message from...

**Speaker of the Assembly  
Carl E. Heastie**

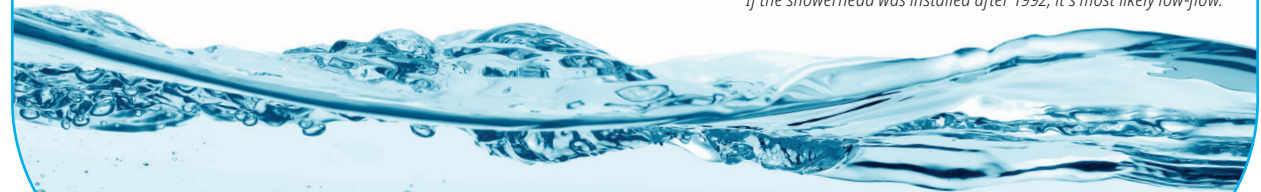
### How many gallons of water do you use per day?

The average American uses 80 to 100 gallons of water daily, according to U.S. Geological Survey estimates. This table shows typical water consumption for common household uses, without conservation measures.

	Typical usage without conservation measures	Water-saving usage and devices
Shower	a 5-minute shower uses 10-25 gallons	take a shorter shower, use a low-flow showerhead*
Tub bath	a full tub uses 36 gallons	close drain before turning on water and fill tub only half full
Toilet flushing	each flush uses 3-7 gallons	use a low-flow water-use toilet or consider an EPA-recommended WaterSense-labeled toilet, combining high performance and high efficiency
Brushing teeth	letting the tap run uses two gallons per minute; one gallon with new faucets	turn off tap while brushing to save water; use faucet aerators or flow restrictors
Hand washing	letting the tap run uses two gallons per minute; one gallon with new faucets	faucet aerators or flow restrictors save water
Shaving	letting the tap run uses two gallons per minute; one gallon with new faucets	turn off tap while shaving to save water
Dishwashing by hand	letting the tap run uses four gallons per minute	install new kitchen faucets, which use about 1-2 gallons per minute, and fill the sink basin with soapy water
Dishwasher	uses 20 gallons (depending on efficiency) whether or not it's a full load	wash only full dishwasher loads
Washing machine	full cycle uses an estimated 40 gallons per load	use new energy-conserving models, which may use less than 25 gallons per load

\*If the showerhead was installed after 1992, it's most likely low-flow.

**Sources:** U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and WaterSense, a partnership program sponsored by EPA: [epa.gov/watersense](http://epa.gov/watersense); U.S. Geological Survey in the U.S. Department of the Interior: [usgs.gov](http://usgs.gov)



8 simple things you can start doing today to help protect our water supply...

## 1 *Check for leaks.*

Small leaks in your toilet or a faucet can waste hundreds of gallons of water daily. Faucet leaks are often caused by old, worn washers and gaskets. If you have a leaking faucet, install a new washer or replace the faucet.

Test for a leaky toilet by adding a few drops of food coloring to the tank. After 15 minutes, if colored water appears in the bowl without flushing, you have a leak. Flush immediately after testing to avoid staining the bowl. A leaky toilet can waste about 200 gallons a day.

Some leaky showerheads can be fixed by ensuring a tight connection between the showerhead and the pipe stem and using pipe tape to secure it.

## 2 *Don't let faucets run.*

Use short bursts of water from the faucet while brushing your teeth, washing your face or shaving instead of letting the water run.

Wrapping your hot water pipes with insulating material can raise the water temperature, reduce heat loss and shorten the time you need to wait with the water running for hot water to reach the faucet or showerhead.

## 3 *Linger less when you shower.*

Taking a shower uses less water than filling up a bathtub. Even so, a shower can use up to 5 gallons of water per minute, depending on your water pressure. Conserve water by taking a shorter shower and turning the water off while lathering and shampooing.

If you have older fixtures, consider switching to a low-flow showerhead.

## 4 *Conserve while washing your car.*

Wash your bike or car with water from a bucket instead of a hose. A running hose can waste 6 gallons per minute. When you do use the hose, control the flow with an automatic shut-off nozzle. Or, let the rain "wash" the car for you.

If you use a car wash, look for one that recycles water.

## 5 *Water your lawn and garden efficiently.*

Water your lawn or garden during the cooler early morning, and don't water on windy days to keep water from evaporating before it can reach thirsty plants. Check with your local county Cornell Cooperative Extension for advice on watering needs in your area.

Raise the cutting height of your lawn mower. Longer grass blades help shade each other, reducing evaporation.

Converting to a water-efficient landscape can reduce outdoor water use by 20 to 50 percent.

## 6 *Reduce waste during dishwashing.*

When purchasing a dishwasher, select a model with water- and energy-saving devices built into the machine.

Only run the dishwasher when it's filled. The amount of water used remains the same regardless of the load size.

When washing dishes in the sink, turn off the tap. Instead, fill the sink with only the water needed to wash the dishes and rinse them in small spurts.

## 7 *Be smart about laundry.*

Front-loading machines use less water than top loaders.

Don't wash small or medium loads unless your machine has water level settings for such loads. Instead, wait until you have enough laundry to fill the machine's capacity.

Consider washing delicate items by hand.

## 8 *Tune up the toilet.*

If a toilet in your home uses 5 gallons or more per flush, you can fill a plastic bottle with water and some pebbles for weight and place it in the back of the tank. The bottle will take up space, allowing the tank to fill using less water, which means less water is being flushed. Experiment to see if a 1 or 2-liter bottle fits better and be sure it is not touching the working parts of the toilet. Don't use a brick; it can flake and clog tubes or valves.

Remember, the more water conserved today, the more there will be for the future.

Many local water utilities provide water audits or conservation kits, or both. Contact your local water company for more information.

