

LOCAL WATER SUPPLY

San Diego County has a semiarid climate and a very small supply of local water. Between 75 and 90 percent of the county's water is imported. Using water efficiently is a permanent way of life in San Diego. Making the most of every drop of water helps to protect San Diego's vibrant economy and preserves our quality of life.



Here is a suggested list of tips that can help you save water.

Read it carefully, and make these water-saving practices a part of your daily life.



SAVE WATER NOW

OUTDOORS

Water landscaping only when needed. Water no more than twice a week unless the weather is hot and dry.

Check soil and plants to decide if irrigation is needed. Probe soil gently with a screwdriver or small spade to determine if it is dry. Leaves and grass lose their luster when they need water.



Water deeply so water will penetrate the soil just below the root zone. This will encourage deep, strong roots

Water landscaping only between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m., when there is less evaporation.

Check your irrigation system, faucets and hoses regularly and repair any leaks. Make sure your irrigation system is operating as efficiently as possible. See resources listed on the fold-in panel for assistance.

Mulch plants well to prevent moisture loss.

Plant low-water-use trees and plants. Many are beautiful and easy to grow.



Use a broom to clean patios, driveways and walkways. Using a hose for this chore wastes water.

Check with your local pool specialist to learn how to operate your pool or spa in a safe and water-efficient manner.

INDOORS

Install ultra-low-flush toilets. These 1.6 gallons per flush toilets cut the amount of water that goes down the drain with each flush by as much as 50 percent or more.



Don't use your toilet as an ashtray or wastebasket.

Check your toilets for leaks. Put a few drops of food color in your toilet tank. If, without flushing, the color begins to appear in the bowl, you have a leak that is wasting many gallons of water a day. Replace the tank's rubber flapper if it is causing the leak.

Take shorter showers. A typical shower uses three to eight gallons of water per minute.

Limit showers to the time it takes to soap up, wash down and rinse off. Better still, shut off the flow of water while soaping and shampooing. Turn the water back on to quickly rinse.

Install water-saving showerheads. All new showerheads use 2.5 gallons a minute or less.



Turn off the water while brushing your teeth and while shaving.

Wet your brush and fill a glass for rinsing before you brush your teeth. Before shaving, fill the bottom of the sink with a few inches of warm water.

Fully load your automatic dishwasher. Each time you run your dishwasher, you use about 25 gallons of water.

Install a high-efficiency clothes washer. These use 40 percent less water than a standard washer.

Keep a bottle of drinking water in the refrigerator. This stops the wasteful practice of running the tap water to cool it for drinking.

Don't leave the rinse water running if you wash dishes by hand. Fill one sink with rinse water. If you have only one sink, first gather all your washed dishes in a dish rack, then rinse them quickly. Also, using the least amount of detergent necessary minimizes the rinse water needed.

Defrost frozen food without running water over the packages. Place food in the refrigerator overnight or defrost it in the microwave.

Rinse vegetables in a filled sink or pan instead of under running water.



Fix leaking plumbing joints. This can save up to 20 gallons of water per day.