The Simple Guide to ...

Water Conservation

2016

Canada is second only to the United States for individual water use. The average Canadian uses four times the amount used by the average Swede and eight times as much as the average Dane. The real concern is that about half of our water use is unnecessary and wasteful. Running taps, leaking faucets, and excessive lawn watering contribute to our very high consumption rates. There are plenty of opportunities for us to reduce our water use, lower our water bills, make better use of our water treatment and waste water infrastructure, and protect our fresh water supplies.

Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation 's "Household Guide to Water Efficiency"

Water Saving Tips

In the Backyard:

- Water lawns and gardens no more than once a week. Early morning or late evening watering reduces evaporation.
- Limt lawn watering to less than 2 cm a week. Undernourished (brown) grass is not dead, just dormant. It will quickly become green when normal rainfall returns.
- Cut grass less frequently and to longer lengths.
- Use compost, grass and leaves as mulch on garden beds to prevent evaporation.
- Rain barrels are great ways of capturing rain runoff for watering gardens.
- Water vegetables and flowers by hand at the base of each plant.

Around the House:

- Repair leaky taps and toilets can save water…and money.
- Check toilets for leaks by adding blue food colouring to the tank. Wait 15 minutes. If the water in the bowl turns blue, there is a leak.
- Replacing the rubber "o" ring or washers in taps can usually repair dripping faucets.
- Add aerators to taps and faucets and use nearly 50% less water.
- Wash only full loads of laundry or dishes.
- Water-saving shower heads can cut water use by 40% and pay for themselves in as little as four months.
- Take shorter showers. Taking a 5 minute instead of 10 minute shower saves about 40 liters of water.
- When brushing your teeth or shaving, turn off the tap when water is not needed.

Gardening ideas to consider...

Traditional landsape design can create a constant battle against drought conditions, weed infestation, insect damage, and drainage problems. By making use of plants that thrive under the various conditions that exist around your property and working with nature, you can create a landscape that is dynamic, water-efficient, beautiful and easy to maintain.

Xeriscaping

Xeriscaping (or zeroscaping) is landscaping and gardening that reduces or eliminates the need for supplemental water. Plants that tolerate hot, dry weather, once established, look attractive even in dry weather.

Grey water system

Gently used water from your bathroom sinks, showers, tubs, and washing machines can be transferred to your garden and greatly reduce stresses on water supplies.

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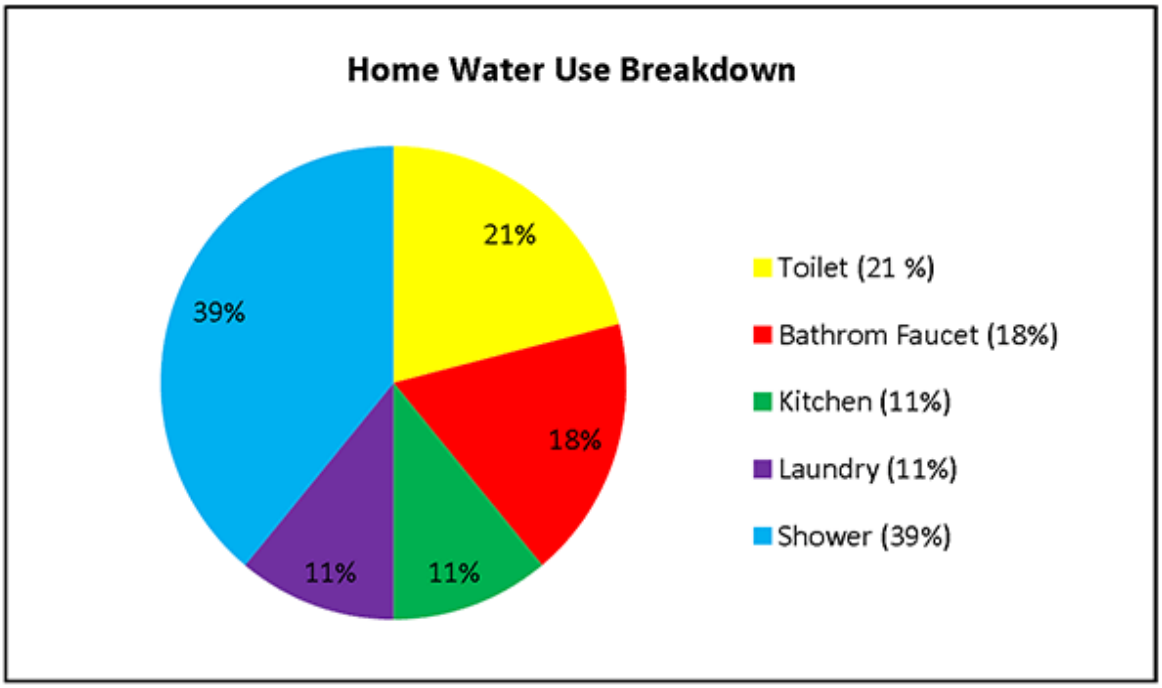

Looking to the Future

Water conservation benefits everyone. By using water more efficiently, we can help ensure a sustainable supply of water for now and for the future. Although three-quarters of the Earth's surface is covered with water, less than one percent is available fresh water. Ninety-seven percent of the water on the planet is too salty for human use. The remaining two percent of fresh water is locked in glaciers and polar ice.

Reducing water use should be the goal of any water efficiency initiative, not just during low water periods but throughout the year. By implementing water conservation measures and practices and reducing water use every day, we can all help ensure the long term health and viability of the water supply and watershed ecosystem.

Low Water Response

The Ontario Low Water Response Program was developed by the Province to help coordinate and support local response in the event of a prolonged period of low stream flows or precipitation.

The response plan outlines three levels of drought:

Level 1

- Potential for water supply problems is identified (minor drought conditions).
- Water users will be asked to voluntarily reduce their water consumption by 10%.

Level 2

- Minor water supply issues are encountered.
- Potential for major supply problems (moderate drought conditions).
- There is the potential for major supply problems.
- Water users will be asked to voluntarily reduce their water consumption by 20%.

Level 3

- Supply no longer meets demand. Social & economic impacts are experienced (severe drought conditions).
- Voluntary measures have not produced the necessary response. Restrictions proposed by the Water Response Team.