

TIPS FOR WATER SAVING IN YOUR HOME & GARDEN



A.) Your GARDEN and OUTDOOR areas (40% of household use)

- Install a tap timer so you'll never forget to turn off the hose (Make sure you only set the timer for the times/days that you are permitted to water). But make sure you don't set the timer to over water your garden - and turn it off when there's a likelihood of rain.
- Install a dripper system and only water during the permitted days/hours.
- Use mulch to prevent water loss through evaporation and prevent soil erosion. Mulch can also help to smother your weeds. (If you live in a high bushfire risk area, check with the Country Fire Service about the best way to use mulch in your garden).
- Plant indigenous native plants for your area - your local nursery, Trees for Life or the State Flora websites can help you choose appropriate species.
- Plant your garden in watering zones (hydrozoning). Plants that require large amounts of water should be planted together. This helps to reduce the amount of water wasted on plants that don't need it.
- Weed! Weeds compete with your plants for water.
- Don't water during windy weather - the water will blow away from where it's needed most.
- Water proof terracotta pots before you plant. Terracotta pots are porous and allow the moisture to escape rapidly.
- Regularly check your outdoor taps and hoses for leaks. Leaks normally get worse, so it pays to fix them as soon as possible.
- Always use a broom or rake to clean paths, paved areas and patios – DO NOT hose them down.

Water Efficient Lawn Varieties

Warm season grasses and cultivars have the lowest water demand and are drought tolerant, including:

- Common or Bermuda Couch
- Santa Ana Couch
- Windsor Green
- Greenlees Park
- Wintergreen
- Kikuyu.

Other warm season grasses such as Buffalo and Saltene have an intermediate water use rate and are reasonably drought resistant.

Lawn Maintenance

- Set mowers so that only one third of the leaf area is removed at any one time. Keeping grass longer shades the soil surface and reduces evaporation loss.
- "Train" your lawn to use less water. In spring, when your lawn is beginning its new growth, let the topsoil dry out so that the grass roots will be forced to grow deeper and make use of subsoil moisture. Then soak your lawn every 10-14 days (20-25ml).

B.) Your BATHROOM (20% of household use) and TOILET (11% of household use)

- Take shorter showers. A shower uses 10-20 litres of water every minute.
- You can save up to 11 litres of water every minute by installing a water efficient shower head.
- Install a dual flush toilet - this can save you up to 50% on every flush.
- Check for a leaking toilet cistern: Put food colouring in the cistern. If the colour shows in the toilet bowl without flushing, you've got a leak.
- Turn the taps off when you're brushing your teeth, washing your hands and shaving.
- Install aerators on your taps.

C.) Your LAUNDRY (16% of household use)

- Look for the *Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards Stars* (<http://www.waterrating.gov.au/>) when you're choosing a washing machine. The more stars, the more water efficient the machine is.
- If you're buying a new washing machine, consider investing in a front loader or a water efficient top loader. Although they may cost more initially, they may use less water and require less detergent.
- Don't turn the washing machine on until you have a full load or make sure you adjust the load setting to suit your washing requirements.
- Fix any dripping taps and install aerators on taps.

D.) Your KITCHEN (11% of household use)

- Install aerators on taps - aerators reduce the water flow and stop you using as much water.
- Only turn the dishwasher on when it's full.
- When you're running the taps waiting for water to cool down or heat up, collect the water in a jug for use on the garden.
- Turn taps off when you're washing vegetables or your hands.
- Fix any dripping taps.

Water Efficient Appliances

(Source: *Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards {WELS} Scheme* www.waterrating.gov.au)

- Nearly half the water savings will come from more efficient washing machines, about 25 per cent from showers and 22 per cent from toilets.
- By choosing to use more water-efficient products in the home, you will save water and cut down on water and energy bills.
- A water-efficient washing machine may use only one-third the water of an inefficient model.
- An old-style single-flush toilet could use up to 12 litres of water per flush. A standard dual flush toilets use only three litres on a half-flush.
- A standard showerhead may use up to 25 litres of water per minute. A water-efficient showerhead might use as little as seven litres per minute.