

MAJOR RIVERS' HOME WATER USE SURVEY



OUTDOORS

1. The lawn and garden are watered only when they need it.

Before you water, check the soil to make sure it is dry. If the grass springs back when you walk across it, it doesn't need to be watered! Plants use the most water during summer. We usually receive enough rainfall in the spring, fall and winter so that watering is not necessary.

2. The lawn and garden are watered only during the cool parts of the day.

Water during the evening or very early in the morning. Never water when the sun is high overhead because water is wasted by evaporation and the hot temperatures burn the leaves.

3. The lawn and garden are not watered when it's windy or raining.

If you water when it's windy, you waste water because it evaporates or is blown away from the area you are trying to water.

4. The water does not run off the lawn and garden onto the sidewalk or gutter.

If you water too long or the soil is already moist, water will run off the lawn and be wasted. If you have a sprinkler system, you could have a controller installed that will shut off the sprinklers when the ground has received enough water.

5. The yard has plants and trees that do not use much water.

There are many flowers, grasses, shrubs and trees that are native to Texas or are adapted to our weather. These plants are beautiful and are drought tolerant.

6. Mulch is used around trees and shrubs.

Mulch can be tree bark, cottonseed hulls, pine straw or hay. Mulch helps to keep the soil cool and slows down the evaporation of water.

7. A bucket of water and a hose nozzle that shuts off when you release the handle are used to wash the car.

Use a sponge and a pail of soapy water to wash the car. Use water from the hose to rinse the car.

Work through the survey with your child. If you put these water-saving ideas to work in your home, your family can save thousands of gallons of water a year.

8. A broom is used to sweep the driveway and sidewalks.

It is wasteful to wash driveways and sidewalks with the hose.

KITCHEN

9. Dishwasher is run only for full loads.

10. Clothes washer is run only for a full load or set for the right amount of water for the amount of clothes.

11. Vegetables are cleaned in a sink of water.

Rinse vegetables in a sink partially filled with water rather than under a running faucet.

12. Hand-washed dishes are rinsed in a sink of water or by pouring water over them.

If you have two sinks, fill one with rinse water. If you have only one sink, put your washed dishes in a dish rack and rinse them by spraying them quickly or by pouring a pan of water over them.

13. Drinking water is kept in the refrigerator.

Running tap water to cool it for drinking is wasteful.

14. Kitchen faucets and pipes are free of leaks.



BATHROOM

15. We take shallow baths.

A partially filled tub uses less water than most showers.

16. We take quick showers.

Limit your showers to the time it takes you to soap up, wash down, and rinse off - less than five minutes.

17. We have water-efficient shower heads.

Hardware stores and plumbing supply stores carry inexpensive, easy-to-install water-efficient showerheads and flow restrictors.

18. We turn off the water while brushing our teeth and shaving.

Before brushing, wet your brush and fill a cup with water for rinsing. For shaving, rinse your razor in a sink partially filled with water.

19. We have water-efficient toilets.

If your house was built after 1992, this is probably true. If not, check the markings on the toilet to see what the tank volume is. The most efficient toilets use 1.2 gallons per flush or less. If you have older, high-water-use toilets, consider replacing them or installing a water displacement device.

20. Toilets are not used as wastebaskets.

Put trash in the wastebasket. Flushing it is wasteful!

21. Bathroom faucets, pipes and toilets are free of leaks.

To check for leaky toilets, put a few drops of food coloring in the toilet tank. If the color appears in the bowl without flushing, you have a water-wasting leak.

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