



WATER CONSERVATION

Over 75% of the planet is covered with water but only about three percent of the Earth's water is fresh water or water that can be used for drinking. The daily use of water is on the rise and many parts of the United States have already reached or exceeded the limits of their supply. Anderson and the surrounding communities are fortunate to have Hartwell Lake to supply water, however, a lack of rainfall, more people moving to our area, and industrial and commercial growth can increase the demand for water. When water is used wisely, you help preserve one of our most precious resources and help the environment...and you can also save money!

See the following sections to see ideas on how you can begin saving water today!

Conservation...A Way of Life

- There are a number of ways to save water, and they all start with you.
- Do at least one thing each day that will save water. Even if savings are small, every drop counts.
- Encourage your school system and government to help develop and promote a water conservation ethic among children and adults.
- Encourage your friends and neighbors to be part of a water-conscious community.
- Check your water meter and bill to track your water usage.
- Teach your children to turn the faucets off tightly after each use.
- Make suggestions to your employer to save water (and dollars) at work.
- Support projects that use reclaimed wastewater for irrigation and other uses.
- Report significant water losses from broken pipes, open hydrants, and errant sprinklers to the property owner or the water department.
- Winterize outdoor spigots when temperatures dip to 20 degrees Fahrenheit to prevent pipes from bursting or freezing.
- Insulate hot water pipes so you don't have to run as much water to get hot water to the faucet.

OUTDOOR

Irrigation Practices

- More plants die from over-watering than from under-watering. Be sure to only water plants when necessary.
- Water your plants deeply but less frequently to create healthier and stronger landscapes.
- Bermuda grasses are dormant (brown) in the winter and will only require water once every three to four weeks and even less if it rains.
- Check your sprinkler system frequently and adjust sprinklers so only your lawn is watered and not the house, sidewalk, or street.
- Minimize evaporation by watering between the hours of 2:00 and 6:00 a.m., when temperatures are cooler and winds are lighter.
- Don't water your lawn on windy days. After all, sidewalks, roads, and driveways don't need water.
- Consider installing a rainwater collection system to meet your non-potable water needs. Rainwater is oxygenated, un-chlorinated, and usually warmer than tap water.
- Adjust your watering schedule to the season. Water your summer lawn every third day and your winter lawn every fifth day.
- Divide your watering cycle into shorter periods to reduce runoff and allow for better absorption each time you water.
- Channel condensation from air conditioning units to a flowerbed, tree, or shrubbery.

- Only water your lawn when needed. You can tell this by simply walking across your lawn. If you leave footprints, it's time to water.
- Once established, ryegrass needs water every three-to-five days, whereas dormant Bermuda grass needs water only once a month or less.
- Install a rain shut-off device on your automatic sprinklers to eliminate unnecessary watering.
- Choose a water-efficient drip irrigation system for trees, shrubs and flowers. Watering at the roots is very effective but be careful not to over water.
- Use the sprinkler for only for larger areas of grass. Water small patches by hand to avoid waste.
- Remember to check your sprinkler system valves periodically for leaks and keep the heads in good shape.
- When watering grass on steep slopes, use a soaker hose to prevent wasteful runoff.
- Teach your family how to shut off your automatic watering systems. Turn sprinklers off if the system is malfunctioning or when a storm is approaching.
- Set a kitchen timer when watering your lawn or garden with a hose. Use this as a reminder for when to shut off your sprinkler.
- Next time you add or replace a flower or shrub, choose a low water use plant for year-round landscape color and save up to 550 gallons per plant each year.
- Water only as rapidly as the soil can absorb the water.
- Use sprinklers that throw big drops of water close to the ground. Smaller drops of water and mist often evaporate before they hit the ground.
- Use a screwdriver as a soil probe to test soil moisture. If it goes in easily, don't water. Proper lawn watering can save thousands of gallons of water annually.
- Place an empty tuna can on your lawn to catch and measure the water output of your sprinklers. For lawn watering advice, contact the Clemson University Cooperative Extension or your local landscape professional.
- Buy a rain gauge to track how much rain or irrigation your yard receives. Call the Clemson University Cooperative Extension or your local landscape professional to see how much rain is needed to skip an irrigation cycle.

Landscaping Choices

- Plant during the spring or fall when the watering requirements are lower.
- Avoid planting turf in areas that are hard to water such as steep inclines and isolated strips along sidewalks and driveways.
- Aerate your lawn. Punch holes in your lawn about six inches apart so water will reach the roots rather than run off the surface.
- Use a layer of organic mulch around plants to reduce evaporation and save hundreds of gallons of water a year.
- Adjust your lawn mower to a higher setting. Longer grass shades root systems and holds soil moisture better than a closely clipped lawn.
- Use porous materials for walkways and patios to keep water in your yard and prevent wasteful runoff.
- Direct downspouts and other runoff towards shrubs and trees, or collect and use for your garden.
- Reduce the amount of grass in your yard by planting shrubs, mulching, and using rock and granite as ground cover.
- Group plants with the same watering needs together to get the most out of your watering time.
- Remember to weed your lawn and garden regularly. Weeds compete with other plants for nutrients, light, and water.
- While fertilizers promote plant growth, they also increase water consumption. Apply the minimum amount of fertilizer needed.
- Avoid installing ornamental water features and fountains that spray water into the air. Trickling or cascading fountains lose less water to evaporation.
- Landscape with Xeriscape or native trees, plants and groundcovers. Call the Clemson University Cooperative Extension or your local landscape professional for more information about these water thrifty plants.
- Leave lower branches on trees and shrubs and allow leaf litter to accumulate on top of the soil. This keeps the soil cooler and reduces evaporation.

- Start a compost pile. Using compost when you plant adds water-holding organic matter to the soil.
- Avoid overseeding your lawn with winter grass. Throw trimmings and peelings from fruits and vegetables into your yard compost to prevent from using the garbage disposal.

Pools and Spas

- Install covers on pools and spas and check for leaks around your pumps.
- Periodically check your pool for leaks if you have an automatic refilling device.
- Use a grease pencil to mark the water level of your pool at the skimmer. Check the mark 24 hours later. Your pool should lose no more than 1/4 inch each day.
- When the kids want to cool off, use the sprinkler in an area where your lawn needs it the most.
- Make sure your swimming pools, fountains, and ponds are equipped with recirculating pumps.
- When backwashing your pool, consider using the water on your landscaping.

Miscellaneous

- Use a broom instead of a hose to clean your driveway or sidewalk and save 80 gallons or more of water each time.
- Choose to have your car washed at a commercial carwash that recycles water.
- Use a hose shut-off nozzle and stop the flow of water while you wash your car and save more than 100 gallons.
- Bathe your pets outdoors in an area in need of water.
- When you give your pet fresh water, don't throw the old water down the drain. Use it to water your trees or shrubs.
- If you accidentally drop ice cubes when filling your glass from the freezer, don't throw them in the sink. Drop them in a house plant instead.
- For hanging baskets, planters, and pots, place ice cubes under the moss or dirt to give your plants a cool drink of water and help eliminate water overflow.
- When you have ice left in your cup from a take-out restaurant, don't throw it in the trash, dump it on a plant.
- When you clean your fish tank, use the water you've drained on your plants. The water is rich in nitrogen and phosphorus, providing you with a free and effective fertilizer.
- Wash your car on the grass. This will water your lawn at the same time.
- Mow your yard less frequently during dry times.
- Collect the water you use for rinsing produce and reuse it to water houseplants.
- Make sure you know where your master water shut-off valve is located. This could save gallons of water and damage to your home if a pipe were to burst.

INDOOR

Cleaning and Washing

- When doing laundry, match the water level to the size of the load.
- When replacing your washing machine, purchase a front-loading washing machine. These save water and electricity.
- Wash clothes only when you have a full load and save up to 600 gallons each month.
- Cut back on rinsing if your dishwasher is new. Newer models clean more thoroughly than older ones.
- Run your washing machine and dishwasher only when they are full and you could save 1000 gallons a month.
- Designate one glass for your drinking water each day. This will cut down on the number of times you run your dishwasher.
- Use the garbage disposal sparingly. Compost instead and save water each time.
- Use only as much detergent as necessary when washing in either the sink or washing machine to avoid wasting unnecessary water to rinse.

In the Kitchen

- Cook food in as little water as possible. This will also retain more of the nutrients.

- Don't use running water to thaw food.
- Wash your produce in the sink or a pan that is partially filled with water instead of running water from the tap.
- Soak your pots and pans instead of letting the water run while you scrape them clean.
- When washing dishes by hand, don't let the water run while rinsing. Fill one sink with wash water and the other with rinse water.
- Keep a pitcher of water in the refrigerator instead of running the tap for cold drinks.
- Select the proper size pans for cooking. Large pans require more cooking water than may be necessary.
- Install an instant water heater on your kitchen sink so you don't have to let the water run while it heats up. This will also reduce heating costs for your household.

In the Bath

- Time your shower to keep it under 5 minutes. You'll save up to 250 gallons a month per person.
- To save water and time, consider brushing your teeth while in the shower.
- Plug the bathtub before turning the water on and then adjust the temperature as the tub fills.
- Bathe your young children together.
- Before you lather up, install a low-flow showerhead. They're inexpensive, easy to install, and can save your family more than 500 gallons a week. Plug the tub when you shower to see how much water is just going down the drain.
- Turn off the water while you brush your teeth and save four gallons a minute. That's 200 gallons a week for a family of four.
- Turn off the water while you shave and you can save more than 100 gallons a week.
- When you are washing your hands, don't let the water run while you lather.
- Turn the water off while you are soaping up, shampooing, and conditioning your hair and you can save more than 50 gallons a week per person.
- Keep a bucket in the shower to catch water as it warms up or runs. Use this water for pets, to flush toilets, cleaning, water plants, and other uses.
- Make sure your toilet flapper doesn't stick open after flushing.
- If your toilet was installed prior to 1980, place a toilet dam or bottle filled with water in your toilet tank to cut down on the amount of water used for each flush. Be sure these devices do not interfere with operating parts. Do not use bricks!
- Install low-volume toilets.
- Put food coloring in your toilet tank. If it seeps into the toilet bowl, you have a leak. It's easy to fix, and you can save more than 600 gallons a month per leak.
- While staying in a hotel or even at home, consider reusing your towels.

Avoid Waste

- Listen for dripping faucets and toilets that leak. Fixing a leak can save 500 gallons per month.
- If your shower can fill a one-gallon bucket in less than 20 seconds, then replace it with a water-efficient showerhead.
- When you shop for a new appliance, consider one offering cycle and load size adjustments. They are more water and energy-efficient than older appliances. Look for the Energy Star label.
- Choose new water-saving appliances, like washing machines that save up to 20 gallons per load. Buy a model with the Energy Star label and save water and electricity.
- Grab a wrench and fix that leaky faucet. It's simple, inexpensive, and can save 140 gallons a week.
- Make sure there are aerators on all of your faucets.
- Drop tissues in the trash instead of flushing it down the toilet and save water each time.
- We're more likely to notice leaky faucets indoors, but don't forget to check outdoor faucets, pipes, and hoses for leaks.