

AM Conservation's Printable Water Conservation Checklist for Homeowners

When it comes to conserving water at home, it is difficult to know where to start. There are so many ways to reduce water use, but every home faces different opportunities and challenges. Wouldn't it be useful for your customers to have a complete checklist of all the ways to conserve water at home?

We thought so! We put together a comprehensive checklist containing simple things that your customers can do to conserve more water.

There is no exact order in which the checklist items should be followed: we'd suggest your customers go through the list and check-off the items that they have either already completed or that do not apply to their unique situation. Once they've done that, they will be left with a list of actionable items that they can tackle.

This list is divided into the following sections: plumbing, laundry, bathroom, kitchen, and outdoors.

Plumbing

- Inspect all piping and faucets for leaks.**
- Install reduced-flow showerheads.** Make sure that they are rated to use less than 2.5 gallons per minute.
- Turn off all water before going away on vacation.** This will eliminate the possibility of leaks while you are away.
- If you have water softening equipment, make sure it is not regenerating and backwashing excessively.** If it is using too much water, you can reserve its use for kitchen use, bathing, and laundry by installing a bypass line. This would allow you to use untreated water for all other purposes.
- Insulate all hot water pipes. Having to clear the "hot" line of cooled water is wasteful.** This will reduce occurrences of hot water in the pipes getting cold over time and needing to be flushed.
- Install a circulating hot water system.** These are a more efficient option.
- Make sure that members of the household understand the importance of always turning water faucets off quickly and tightly.**
- Check all toilets for leaks.** To do this, use a Leak Detection Tablet in your toilet tank. If the color is visible in the bowl, you have a leak and should make the necessary repairs.
- Replace older toilets with toilets that use less than 1.6 gallons per flush.**
- If replacing old toilets is not an option, you can reduce the water required for flushing some older toilets.** Try using a Toilet Tank Bank™ on your older toilets. It's a globally recognized water saving product that is effective, maintenance free, and user friendly.
- Alternatively, adjust the float level of the toilet.** This will reduce the amount of water used to flush the toilet. Adjust the level only slightly at first as a test.
- Don't use the toilet as a trash disposal for bathroom waste.**
- In the case of an emergency: If the toilet is not working but needs flushing, use gray water saved from household cleaning or bathing. Put the water in the toilet bowl, not the tank (this could damage your toilet further).**

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Laundry

- Only use the washer with a full load OR use a lower water setting.
- Replace old washers with an Energy Star® appliance that uses between 18 and 25 gallons per load. Older washers use up to 40 gallons per load.
- Don't wash clothes more often than necessary. Double-check clothing before washing. Washing clothes more often than necessary wastes water and increases wear on clothes.
- Encourage your kids to change into play-clothes when they get home from school. This way, school clothing and play clothing can be worn several times before needing to be washed.
- Both clothing and household items do not need to be washed separately.
- In the case of an emergency: You can save even more water by siphoning gray water from the washing machine into a large container. This water could be used to flush the toilet or water plants. It should be used as soon as possible (don't store the water for longer than 24 hours).

Bathrooms

- Get used to taking 5-minute showers. Keep it short and sweet! To keep track of time, try using a Shower Timer.
- Reduce the number of showers you take every week. To really conserve water, you could replace some showers with sponge baths using only a small amount of water in a container.
- Turn off the water while you are applying soap or shampoo. A shut-off valve could be installed to stop the flow without affecting the water temperature.

- Turn off the water while shaving, brushing teeth, etc.
- In the case of an emergency: Close the bathtub drain so that shower water stays in the tub. This water could be reused for flushing the toilet or watering outdoor plants.

In the Kitchen

- Use a bowl of water to peel and clean vegetables and fruits.
- To get warm water in the sink, turn on the hot water first, and then add cold water as necessary. You will get warm water faster than turning on the tap and waiting for the right water temperature.
- Limit your use of the garbage disposal. To do this, save food scraps and run the disposal only once to dispose of your waste. Even better, you could place food scraps in a compost bin rather than a garbage disposal.
- When boiling water or cooking food in a pot, use a tight-fitting lid. This will prevent water from boiling away. It will also boil water or cook food faster.
- Or, use a tea kettle to boil water.
- Avoid overcooking and water loss by timing the cooking process.
- Use an appropriate pan size. Larger pans need more water for cooking.
- Use a pressure cooker to save water. They can also save you valuable time.
- Save leftover vegetable juices for soups or stews.

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In the Kitchen (cont.)

- Use syrups and juices from canned goods to save water.
- Only run the dishwasher with a full load. Instead, use a Dish Squeegee™ and help save water when you scrape leftovers off of dishes instead of rinsing them.
- If washing by hand, save water by using one sink of soapy water and a second sink of hot water for rinsing.
- Keep chilled water in a bottle in the refrigerator rather than running the tap for cold water to serve at dinner. You can shake the bottle before serving to ensure the water does not taste flat.
- In the case of an emergency:** Refrigerate water in clean plastic or glass jugs with tight-fitting lids.

Outdoor use

- If you use a garden hose to hose down your car, wash it less often to save water.
- Or, use a bucket of warm soapy water to remove dirt from the car, and then hose it down only as a final rinse.
- Even better, wash your car when it's raining for a free rinse!
- For outdoor pools, be sure to cover them to prevent evaporation when not in use.
- Clean your swimming pool filter often to prevent having to change the water.
- Never use a hose to clean garage floors, sidewalks, or a driveway: use a broom instead!
- Plan your landscape and gardens to minimize the need for water.