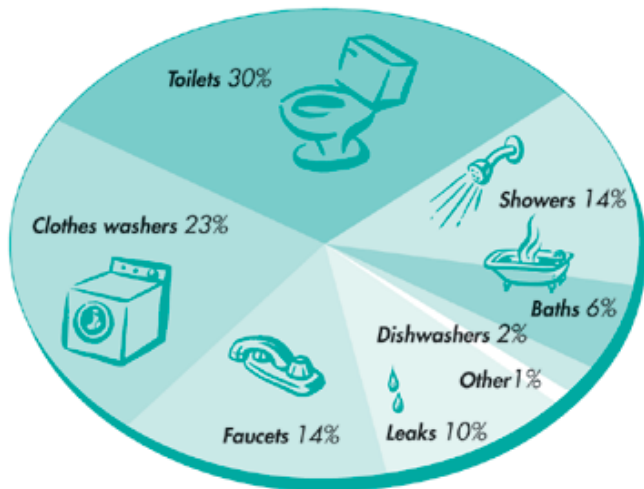


# HOUSEHOLD WATER SAVINGS TIPS

## SAVING WATER INDOORS

The average single family residential customer in Medford uses around 5,000 gallons of water per month indoors. Homes with 1 to 2 residents often use even less. Following is a typical breakdown of water used in the home.



[www.metrovancouver.org](http://www.metrovancouver.org)

## In the Kitchen

- ◆ Your dishwasher uses the same amount of water whether it is full or nearly empty of dishes, so wait until it's full to run it. Many dishwashers have a water saver cycle to save even more water.
- ◆ Keep a container of drinking water in the refrigerator, instead of letting the faucet run until the water cools down.
- ◆ Avoid just letting the water run when rinsing vegetables, cleaning dishes or to defrost food.
- ◆ Fix leaks promptly! Even a small faucet drip can waste 20 gallons of water each day. Large leaks can waste hundreds of gallons per day.

## In the Laundry Room

- ◆ Adjust the water level of washing machines to fit the size of the load. Better yet, wait until you have full loads to wash.
- ◆ When purchasing a new washing machine, consider front-load models, which typically use one-third less water than top-load machines.

## In the Bathroom



### Toilet

- ◆ For water savings with an existing toilet, install early-closing flappers or place small containers filled with pebbles and water in open spaces within the tank.
- ◆ Even better, replace an old toilet with a new model and use  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  as much water each time you flush. Install WaterSense<sup>®</sup> certified toilets and save even more.
- ◆ Toilet leaks are common and easily repaired with inexpensive replacement parts. Occasionally check for toilet leaks by adding about 10 drops of food coloring to the tank. If the toilet is leaking, color will appear in the bowl within 15-20 minutes.
- ◆ Avoid using the toilet as a wastebasket.

### Shower

- ◆ Replacing a shower head is easy and relatively inexpensive. Today's standard models use  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  as much water as older relics. WaterSense models save even more, while also being certified to perform well.
- ◆ Simply taking shorter showers will save gallons of water. A bath can use more or less than a shower depending on how high it is filled.

### Faucets

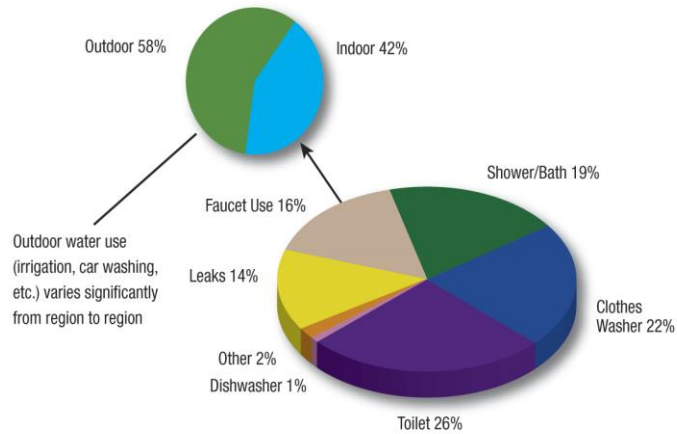
- ◆ Changing an aerator is both simple and very low cost. Look for aerators that flow  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 gallon per minute for bathroom faucets. These typically function well while using less than half as much water as current standard faucets and about  $\frac{1}{8}$  as much as older faucets. If the faucet currently has no aerator at all, savings from adding one will be even more.
- ◆ Avoid letting the water run while brushing your teeth or shaving.

Many products are now WaterSense certified. Look for WaterSense labels to help you identify products that meet high water efficiency standards and perform well too.



# SAVING WATER OUTDOORS

In the summer, average residential water use is approximately 5 times higher than in the winter; mainly due to landscape irrigation.



Residential uses of water in the United States (typically 200 gallons per day per household).  
Data from Mayer, et al. Residential End Uses of Water, 1999.

## Watering Wisely

- ◆ Water landscaping only when needed. As a general rule, lawns only need watering 3-5 days a week in the summer. Daily watering may only be necessary when temperatures reach over 100 degrees.
- ◆ Water between sunset and sunrise when temperatures and wind are the lowest. Watering during the middle of the day can result in a 30% increase in required water due to evaporation and wind.
- ◆ Step on the grass; if it springs back up when you move your foot, it does not need water.
- ◆ Avoid over-fertilizing your lawn. Applying fertilizer increases the need for water.
- ◆ Group plants with similar watering needs in the same areas.
- ◆ Since our local soils tend to contain a lot of clay and can't absorb water quickly, try breaking watering times into two or more shorter cycles, with about an hour resting time in between. This will reduce run-off and increase the amount of water soaking into the ground.
- ◆ Check the Medford Water Commission **website** or call us at **774-2436** for a sample watering schedule.
- ◆ You can also find more information on current watering needs by calling our **Lawn Watering Infoline at 774-2460**.

## Sprinkler Care

- ◆ Adjust sprinklers to avoid watering sidewalks and driveways.
- ◆ Be sure to fix all leaks promptly no matter how small they may seem. Even a small leak can waste hundreds of gallons of water.
- ◆ Give your sprinkler system an occasional checkup. If you haven't observed your system operating lately, turn it on and make sure sprinklers are all facing the right direction and functioning properly.

## Yard Maintenance

- ◆ Mulching and adding compost to soil can help soil absorb and store water, minimize evaporation, reduce erosion and help control weeds.
- ◆ Use a broom instead of a hose to clean your driveway or sidewalk. A hose can use 100 gallons in 10 minutes.
- ◆ Raise your lawn mower level to 3 inches. This encourages grass roots to grow deeper, shades the root system and holds soil moisture better than a closely clipped lawn.
- ◆ Keep your lawn mower blades sharpened. Dull blades tear grass, forcing it to use more water.

## Car Washing

- ◆ Consider using a commercial car wash that recycles water.
- ◆ If you use a hose to wash your car, be sure to use a hose nozzle that turns the water off when you are not using it. Washing a car for 10 minutes can easily use 100 gallons of water if you let the water run the entire time.
- ◆ Wash with a bucket of water and use the hose only for quick rinses.
- ◆ Wash items such as bicycles and trash cans on the lawn to prevent the water from running down the storm drain.



**Medford Water Commission**  
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