

## USING LESS WATER *INSIDE* YOUR HOME!

Generally speaking, we can all do more to conserve water. The average Okanagan resident uses 789 litres of water every day! If you had to collect that, you'd need to make 98 trips with four-litre jugs in each hand. Our water use is well above the British Columbia average of almost 500 litres a day and more than double the Canadian average of 374 litres per person each day.

So there's plenty of room for improvement. And much of that improvement can take place with some simple changes to how you and your family use water around your home. In fact, we can easily cut consumption by as much as 40 percent, reducing the stress on our environment and the need for expensive investments in water system infrastructure.



### THE BATHROOM

Close to 70 percent of all water used in a house flows through the bathroom faucets and toilet tank!

- Install water saving showerheads and aerators on bathroom taps and faucets.
- Take shorter showers or use less water when you use the bathtub.
- Turn off the water when shampooing your hair, shaving or brushing your teeth. Shaving with the water running consumes 80 litres of water, while brushing your teeth with a free flowing faucet sees 8 litres go down the drain!
- Flush toilets less often.
- Repair leaky toilets and faucets. Even a minor leak.

### THE KITCHEN

- Install aerators on kitchen taps.
- Repair leaky faucets. Dripping taps can waste as much as 300 litres of water a week!
- Wash vegetables and fruit in a pan rather than under a running tap. Use water that's left over for your houseplants or garden.
- Keep a jug of cold water in your fridge, rather than running a faucet. A faucet uses between 7 and 12 litres of water each minute.
- Wash dishes by hand.
- Scrape leftover food from dishes before putting them in the dishwasher.
- Run your dishwasher only when it is full. A dishwasher can use up to 88 litres of water per load!

### THE LAUNDRY

- Repair leaky taps.
- Wash your clothes only when they are dirty and when you can do a full load. If you have different load size settings, please use them to match the amount of water needed!

## USING LESS WATER *OUTSIDE* YOUR HOME!

### CONSERVATION COMES WITH BETTER DIRT!!

Improve your soil and lower your water consumption by 25% or more.\*

- Aerate your soil every spring. Over time, it gets compacted, especially if you apply chemical fertilizers. Aeration improves water penetration and helps oxygen and organic materials to reach the roots. Allow cores to dry out and break down, don't rake them up.
- Top dress your lawn with compost or other organic material so that your lawn holds water and nutrients longer, meaning you don't have to water as often.
- Grass-cycling helps! Leave grass clippings on the ground and they'll provide up to 25% of your lawn's fertilizer requirements. As clippings decompose, valuable nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium will return to your soil...it is nature's slow release fertilizer.

\*According to studies by the City of Kelowna on residential lawns top-dressed with a combination of OgoGrow and compost.

## CHECK YOUR IRRIGATION SYSTEM

Automatic sprinkling systems should save water, but often they waste water. Check for these common problems.

- Sprinkler heads—Once a month do a walk through inspection looking for leaking heads or those that are spraying in the wrong direction. As well, make sure none of the heads are blocked by plant growth.
- Pressure—If the water mists from sprinkler heads, the pressure is too high and it will evaporated before hitting the ground. High pressure will also wear out your heads faster. The optimum pressure should be 25–35 psi for fixed spray heads, 40–60 psi for rotary heads, 10–20 psi for micro jets and 20 psi for drip lines.
- Coverage—You should have some overlap in coverage from head to head. Without this you may try to over-water to compensate and that wastes water.
- Zones—If you don't install enough zones, you create inefficiencies that will run up the cost of your water bill, eclipsing the cost of having the proper number of zones in the first place. Ensure your zones are appropriate for the plant grouping and microclimate of your yard.
- Timer—Take control of your timer! One of the greatest contributors to peak water use is through the misuse of irrigation timers. Adjust your timer for the season and turn it off when it rains. You don't need to water every day. Leave your timer on manual and water only when you actually need to!



### CHECK OUT THESE GREAT WEBSITES FOR MORE WATER SAVING HINTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

[HTTP://WWW.EC.GC.CA/eau-water](http://www.ec.gc.ca/eau-water)

[HTTP://WWW.WJWC.CA/conservation.htm](http://www.wjwc.ca/conservation.htm)

## WATER CONSERVATION IN THE CENTRAL OKANAGAN

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