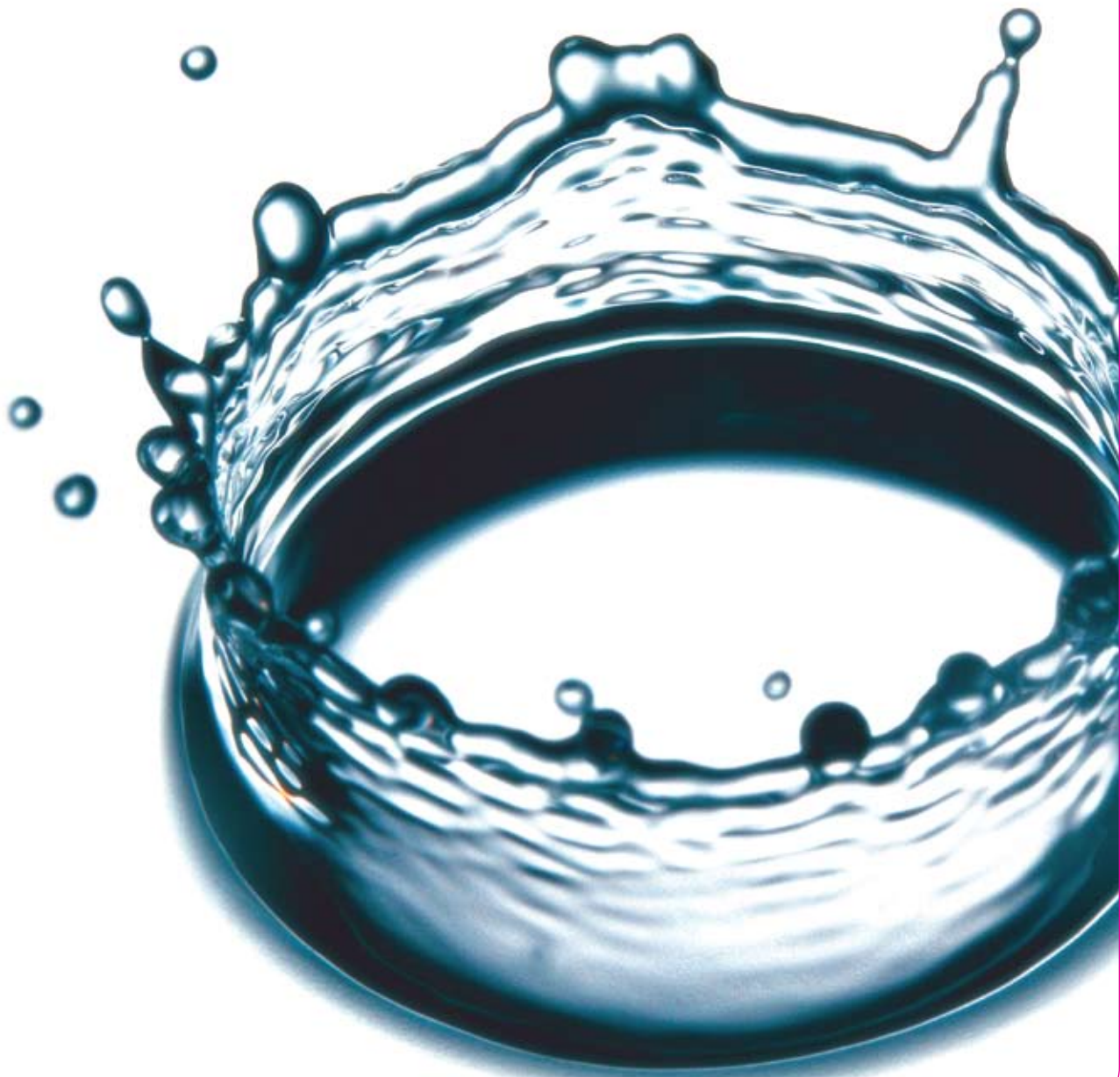


# Every drop is beautiful.

So here are some great tips on  
conserving water around the house.



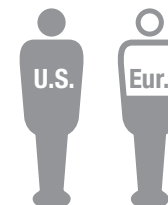
# Water. It's only the most important substance on Earth.



**We drink it.** Clean with it. Cook, bathe and play with it. In North Texas, we depend on a system of reservoirs for the water we need to do all those things. These reservoirs were constructed by the Tarrant Regional Water District (TRWD), the water supplier responsible for meeting the needs of almost two million people across an 11-county area that includes Tarrant County.

But the water supplies we depend on are not endless resources. For one thing, drought conditions are just a part of life here in North Texas. And the number of people living in our region is expected to double in the next 50 years. That means the demand for water will certainly rise—and meeting that demand will be a challenge.

That's why water conservation is becoming so important. In fact, plans call for 28 percent of our future water supplies to come from conservation and water reuse. That's smart—because the alternatives are limited and expensive. If you and your family make a real effort to save water, that will help us all stretch our water resources—and our dollars—as far as possible. It's really not that hard to do. So why not start today?



**AMAZING WATER FACT:**

In the United States, a typical American uses an average of 101 gallons of water per day; the average European uses 53 gallons. (Source: EPA)



# Brush up on the latest conservation trends.

## **TIPS FOR SAVING WATER IN THE BATHROOM:**

**Fix leaking faucets and toilets.** It's easy and could save your family thousands of gallons of water per year. In fact, studies estimate that those drips and leaks add up to about 10 percent of all indoor water use.

**Replace older toilets.** Toilets sold before 1992 use  $3\frac{1}{2}$  or more gallons of water per flush. The current standard uses 1.6 gallons, but newer high-efficiency toilets use 1.28 gallons or less. Replacing older toilets with high-efficiency toilets could lower your home's water use by 15 percent.

**Test your toilet for leaks.** Place a few drops of food coloring in the tank and wait 15-20 minutes. If you see color in the bowl, you have a leak. The most common source of leaks is a faulty flapper valve.

**Adjust the float device in your toilet so the water shuts off about an inch below the overflow tube.** Water pressure has a tendency to increase at night, when water use is low. Increased pressure can cause "water creep" inside your tank, raising the water level by a half-inch or more and causing continuous running of the toilet.

**Aim at the wastebasket, not the toilet (when you want to throw something away, that is).** Those extra flushes waste water and money.

**Take a shower instead of a bath.** A bath can use more than twice as much water as a 10-minute shower.

**Then, cut a couple of minutes off your shower time.** This will save about four gallons per shower. If you shower once a day, that adds up to 1,460 gallons of water a year. A family of four would save about 5,840 gallons a year.

**Switch to low-flow showerheads.** They use 2.5 gallons of water per minute or less. To see if you have one, place a five-gallon bucket in your shower to capture the flow. Turn the shower on for two minutes. If the bucket overflows, replace the showerhead.

**Install aerators on your faucets.** These inexpensive items mix air into the flow while maintaining the pressure. You won't notice the difference, but you'll cut your faucet water use in half.

**Turn off the faucet while brushing your teeth or shaving.** Running the faucet for a couple of minutes while you're not using the water wastes two or more gallons.

# Cooking up a conservation plan.

## TIPS FOR SAVING WATER IN THE KITCHEN:

**Load up that dishwasher.** Waiting until you have a full load to run saves water and energy.

**Don't rinse your dishes before putting them in the dishwasher.** Scraping instead of rinsing dishes before you load them can save you 10 or more gallons of water per load.

**Feed the compost pile, not the garbage disposal.** Place food scraps in a container near the sink for later composting. If you do use a disposal, use it less often.

**Install an aerator on your faucet.** It will mix air into the flow, while maintaining the pressure. It's inexpensive. You won't notice the difference in the water flow—but you'll cut your faucet water use in half.

**When washing dishes by hand, don't leave the water running while you wash.** Fill the second side of the sink with rinse water instead. Besides, you're fighting a losing battle when you compare washing those dinner dishes by hand (16-25 gallons) with today's energy efficient dishwashers (4 to 7 gallons).



### AMAZING WATER FACT:

The average annual household water use is 127,400 gallons, which is about 350 gallons per day. H<sub>2</sub>O ouch!

## THOSE LITTLE DRIPS ADD UP. PRETTY DARN QUICK.

Drops per minute from a leaky faucet = Gallons of water wasted per month

60	259
90	389
120	518

Source: American Water Works Association Drip Calculator (awwa.)



# Let's make conservation a grassroots effort.

Some people say we're obsessed with our lawns in Texas. That may or may not be true, but watering our lawns does account for about half of all the water we use at home. And according to the experts, most lawns get twice as much water as they really need.

- Over watering is a habit that wastes hundreds of thousands of gallons of water each year. Just look around your neighborhood and you'll see all the signs: water gushing down the curb, sprinkler heads that resemble geysers, sprinklers going full blast during a downpour.
- Now that's a waste we really can't afford. So let's all make an effort to give our lawns as much water as they need—and no more.

# It pays to leave a lawn alone sometimes.



## **TIPS FOR SAVING WATER ON THE LAWN:**

**Give the sprinkler a rest.** In Texas, we tend to water our lawns much too often for much too long. Leave your lawn alone once in a while and it will do fine—maybe even better.

**Don't water between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.** Up to 30 percent of the water sprayed on lawns during the heat of the day can be lost to evaporation. So it's much cooler to water when it's cooler.

**Inch toward conservation.** Apply just an inch of water to your lawn once a week during the summer. That will encourage deeper root systems and make for healthier grass.

**Cut back on your irrigation frequency in the fall and winter.** Lawns don't need as much water during the cooler seasons. Applying about an inch every two weeks in the fall, and even less in the winter, should be plenty.

**Cycle and soak to avoid runoff.** It takes a while for water to soak into our North Texas clay soils. Rather than running your spray heads for long periods of time, try running zones in shorter bursts, with one hour between cycles. This will give the water time to soak in instead of running off.

**Be sensitive—use rain and freeze sensors.** They'll trigger automatic sprinkler systems to shut off during downpours or when temperatures dip near freezing. They could reduce your outdoor water use by five to ten percent.

**Turn your system off after a good rain.** Why duplicate what Mother Nature just provided for free? Even better—put your sprinkler system in manual mode and water only as needed.

**Install a “smart” controller.** It's an irrigation clock that automatically adjusts run times in response to weather conditions.

**Check your irrigation system regularly.** Fix leaks or damaged sprinkler heads and make sure they're aimed at the landscape, not the street or sidewalk.

**Don't be a scalper.** Taller grass holds moisture better and slows down evaporation. Leaving lawn clippings on your lawn does the same and also returns valuable nutrients to the soil.

**IT TAKES ABOUT 2,500 GALLONS TO PUT AN INCH OF WATER ON A 4,000 SQUARE-FOOT YARD.**

Doing that every five to seven days from June–September adds another 40,000–60,000 gallons to your water bill, at a cost of about \$30–\$45 a month.



# Don't get hosed on your water bill.

## TIPS FOR SAVING WATER OUTSIDE THE HOUSE:

**Water by the drop using drip irrigation for flowerbeds, ground cover, vegetable gardens and container plants.** A drip system saves water by allowing you to target water at or near plant root zones. If you already have spray heads in place, you can use adapters to convert from spray to drip.

**Replace that thirsty turf.** Save water by replacing little-used areas of your lawn with other types of landscaping and water-stingy plants.

**Add some mulch to the mix.** Placing a three-to-four inch layer of mulch, like bark or wood chips, to flowerbeds and around trees and shrubs helps retain moisture and limit weed growth.

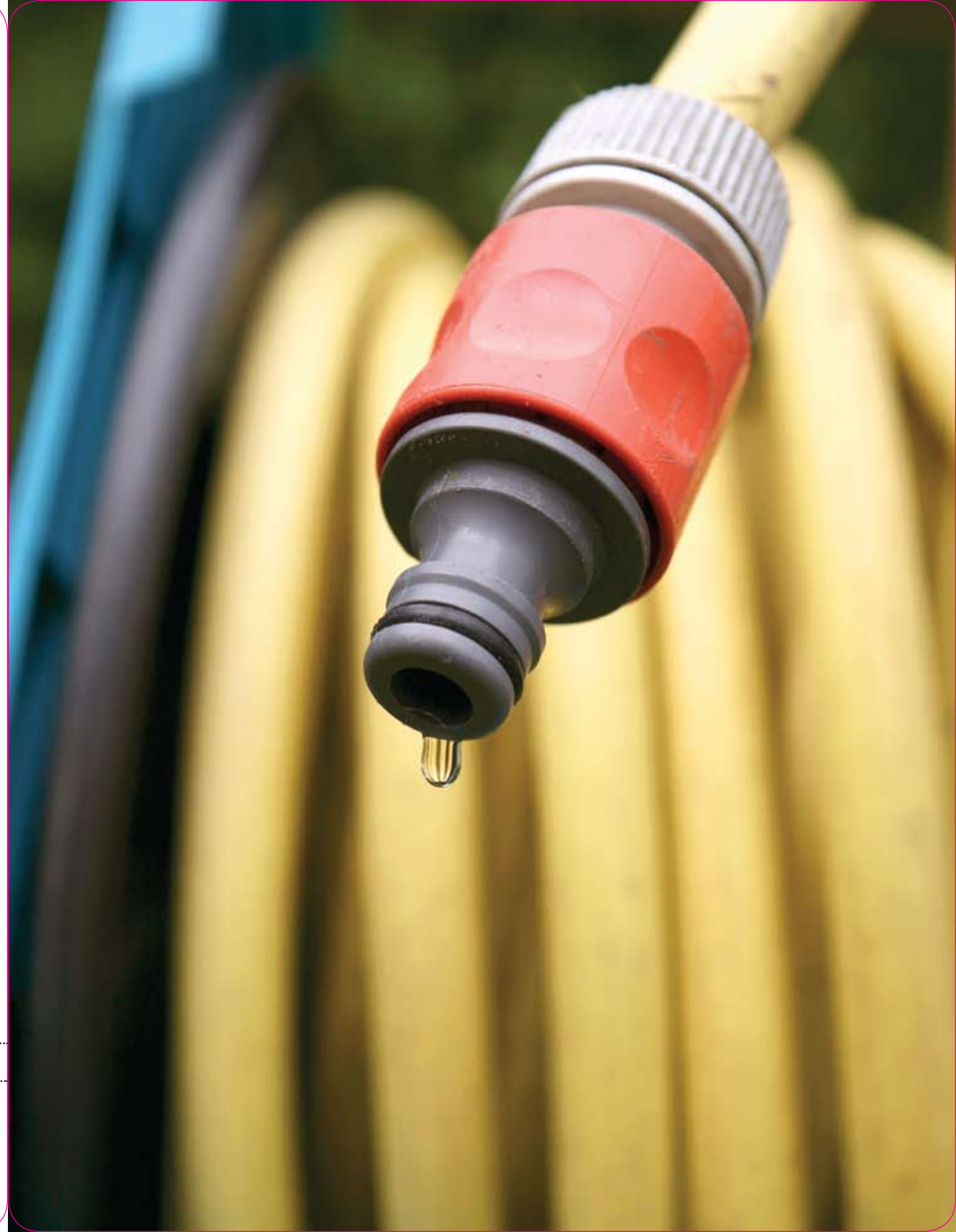
**Grow native.** Native and adapted plants thrive on less water, can take the Texas heat and are easier to maintain. Find more information at [www.txsmartscape.com](http://www.txsmartscape.com).

**Take your car to a car wash that uses a water recycling system.** If you wash your car at home, use a bucket of water and a hose with a nozzle on it to stop the flow between rinsing.

**Break out the broom.** Hosing down your driveway and sidewalk uses about five gallons of water a minute. Sweeping is much less wasteful, and who can't use the exercise?

## COOL TRICK: USE YOUR WATER METER TO CHECK FOR LEAKS.

Turn off all fixtures and note the meter reading. Keep the water off for a couple of hours, then check to see if the meter reading has changed. If it has, you have a leak. Common sources of leaks are toilets, dripping faucets and sprinkler systems.



# Clean your clothes with a clean conscience.

## TIPS FOR SAVING WATER IN THE LAUNDRY ROOM:

**Load up that machine.** Wait until you have a full load, to save water and energy. If you must do a smaller load, adjust the water level accordingly.

**Make your next washer an Energy Star® model.** Replace a conventional washer with a high-efficiency one (that uses 27 gallons per load or less) and you'll lower your energy bills and use about 38 percent less water. That's 5,000 to 7,000 gallons per year for the average household.



### AMAZING WATER FACT:

Letting your faucet run for five minutes uses about as much electricity as a 60-watt light bulb does in 14 hours. H<sub>2</sub>O my!

## AVERAGE INDOOR WATER USE:

### Non-conserving home: 69.3 gallons per person per day

Toilets	26.7%	18.5 gal
Showers	16.8%	11.6 gal
Faucets	15.7%	10.9 gal
Bathtub	1.7%	1.2 gal
Clothes Washer	21.7%	15.0 gal
Leaks	13.7%	9.5 gal
Other	2.2%	1.6 gal

### Conserving home: 45.2 gallons per person per day

Toilets	18.0%	8.2 gal
Showers	19.5%	8.8 gal
Faucets	23.9%	10.8 gal
Bathtub	2.7%	1.2 gal
Clothes Washer	22.1%	10.0 gal
Leaks	8.8%	4.0 gal
Other	3.4%	1.6 gal

Source: American Water Works Research Foundation, "Residential End Uses of Water," 1999

Source: Handbook of Water Use and Conservation, Amy Vickers, 2001



# Save water. Nothing can replace it.

Visit [www.savetarrantwater.com](http://www.savetarrantwater.com) for more information on how to do your part in saving our most precious resource—water.

