



Residential Water Conservation Checklist

Indoor Water Conservation Activities

Have you replaced your toilets within the past 20 years?

- Yes** – Toilets in my home use 1.6 gallons per flush (gpf) or less.
- No** – It's likely that these toilets are inefficient and can be using as much as 5 gpf.
- Not Sure** – Check your toilet for indications of how much water it uses per flush (refer to the images on the right for examples). Federal standards require new toilets to use 1.6 gallons per flush or less.

How to identify the flush rate of your toilet: look on the toilet bowl (top) or lift the cover of the tank (bottom).



Does your toilet run during the day or make flushing noises when not in use?

- Yes** – Your toilet may have a leak at the flapper. Contact a professional plumber for assistance if needed.
- No** – The toilet may not have a leak that can be heard however it is a good practice to periodically check for leaks. To check for a leaking toilet, carefully remove the toilet tank lid and add a dye tablet (or a few drops of food coloring) to the water. Wait for 15 minutes, if colored water appears in the bowl that may indicate a flapper leak.

Have you replaced your showerhead within the past 10 years?

- Yes** – Your showerhead is likely water-efficient.
- No** – We recommend replacing your current model with an efficient **WaterSense** labeled showerhead.
- Not Sure** – Use a water flow rate bag to see how much water your showerhead uses. Efficient models use 2 gallons per minute (gpm) or less.

The Home Energy and Water Saving Toolkit is stocked with free supplies and devices.

Check out this kit at the Burlingame Public Library!

Are your kitchen and bathroom faucets equipped with faucet aerators?

- Yes** – Your faucets should be flowing at an efficient rate (max. 1.5 gpm).
- No** – Installing a faucet aerator is as easy as screwing in a lightbulb. Visit your local library and check out the **San Mateo County Check It Out! Home Energy and Water Saving Toolkit** for free faucet aerators.
- Not Sure** – Use a water flow rate bag to see how much water your faucet uses.



Is your clothes washing machine either a front loader or energy star model?

- Yes** – It's likely that your clothes washing machine is an efficient model.
- No** – Your clothes washer may be water-inefficient and you may want to consider upgrading it with a high-efficiency model to save more water. Visit www.energystar.gov for a list of certified products.



Outdoor Water Conservation Activities

Do you have a garden or outdoor landscape?

- Yes** and we have a drought-tolerant landscape.
- Yes** and we have a turf lawn but are interested in making it more water-efficient. If converting your entire lawn to a drought-tolerant landscape is too big of a change, start with something small like the corner of your garden. For inspiration or tips, attend a free gardening class here: www.bawsca.org/classes or <http://smsf-mastergardeners.ucanr.edu>.
- No**. Even though you may not have a garden to call your own, did you know that the each single family residence is entitled to one tree at no charge? The Parks Division staff plants trees in the City's planter strip three times a year, contact the Parks Division at [650-558-7330](tel:650-558-7330) or parksadmin@burlingame.org for info.

If you have a garden, how do you water it?

- Drip system** – Drip systems are extremely efficient since it delivers water directly to the plant. Make sure to periodically check the drip emitters for leaks.
- Sprinkler system** – Sprinkler systems spray water everywhere which is good for turf lawns, but not if you have narrow planter strips or plants with varying water uses. Consider upgrading your sprinklers to a drip irrigation or replacing current heads with micro-spray heads for your trees and plants.
- Hand water** – If you're manually watering your lawn, do you have a shut-off nozzle for your hose? If not, this inexpensive nozzle can help reduce water waste.
- Rarely watered/rainwater** – Do you have an established garden but still occasionally water the plants? Consider these actions:
 - Install a **rain barrel** to store water for future use. The City offers a **\$100 rebate** off the purchase of a qualifying barrel, visit bawsca.org for details.
 - Install a **Laundry-to-Landscape Graywater System** which diverts the rinse water from your washing machine directly to your garden instead of the sewer.



If you use an irrigation controller, is it properly set?

- Yes** – My irrigation scheduler is based on the garden's water requirements and is adjusted seasonally.
- No or Not Sure** – If you don't know how to operate your irrigation controller, attend a free workshop that can help you. Visit www.bawsca.org/classes and search for irrigation-related classes. In addition, [EPA's WaterSense program](#) recommends specific smart irrigation controllers which use local weather and landscape conditions to create a customized watering schedule instead of irrigating using a preset schedule. Visit www.epa.gov/watersense for more information, including a list of approved [WaterSense](#) products.

Does your irrigation system have any leaks?

- Yes** – Irrigation leaks can waste thousands of gallons of water. Many irrigation leaks can be fixed with easily found replacement parts or by contacting an irrigation professional.
- No** – An irrigation system without any leaks distributes water to your landscape effectively. To maximize efficiency, ensure that your irrigation schedule is appropriate.
- Not Sure** – Run your irrigation system on manual mode and inspect the system for leaks. Look for unusual ponding or standing water in your garden, broken sprinkler heads and/or drip emitters for any damages, clogs, or misdirected heads.

Do your shrubs have a layer of mulch?

- Yes** – Fun Fact: mulch helps increase water efficiency by reducing the rate that water is evaporated from the soil by the sun.
- No** – Apply a minimum of 2 inches of mulch to your shrubs to help reduce the need for frequent irrigation, increase plant health, and discourage weed growth.

