

BE WATER WISE  
ALL AROUND  
THE HOUSE



### Fill 'er Up

In many machines, a full load of clothes uses the same amount of water as a half load. Since most machines use 40-60 gallons of water, make every cycle count. Unless you load the machine to its rated capacity, you're not receiving full value from the water and energy you're using. The perma-press cycle uses 1/3 more water than regular settings.



If you've invested in a water-saving washing machine, remember to use the proper water-level setting.

Use dish pans or plug the sinks when washing dishes by hand. Don't let the water run continuously when washing or rinsing.

Load the dishwasher to capacity. Operating it partially filled wastes water and energy.



### Kitchen Conservation

An inexpensive aerator attached to the kitchen faucet will save water.



Plug the drain or use a pan when washing vegetables. Later, the water can be poured on houseplants.

Use the garbage disposal sparingly. Accumulate the waste and dispose of it all at once by flushing with cold water—or better yet, save all the waste for composting.



Keep a jar of drinking water in the refrigerator, rather than letting the water run in the sink until you get cold water. Or, to avoid opening the refrigerator door, keep ice water in a picnic jug on the kitchen counter.

**Remember—**  
Your hands are the best conservation devices.

**Use them—**  
To turn off the water when it's not being used, to fix leaks, to install water-saving devices, and more.



Be water wise.

For more information, contact

Virginia Water Resources Research Center  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
617 North Main Street  
Blacksburg, Virginia 24060-3397  
Phone (703) 231-8036



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# BE WATER

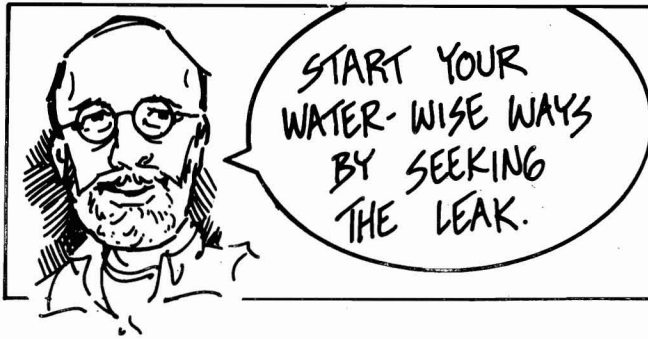
# WISE



Some Water-Wise  
Tips  
from the  
Virginia  
Water Center

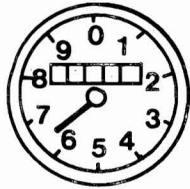
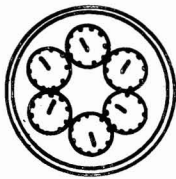
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### Take Me to Your Meter

First, turn off all water faucets and taps and don't flush the toilet. Next, find your water meter. It should look like one of these—



If any dial moves within a half hour, you have a leak somewhere.

**Drip . . . Drip . . . Drip**  
Check your water line connections and faucets for leaks. If necessary, tighten the connections.



Replace all the worn-out washers. You need only a screwdriver, pliers, and the right size washer.

### Beware of the Strong, Silent Type

A toilet leak can waste hundreds of gallons of water a day. Listen for an ominous "HSSSS" sound. Since many leaks are silent, put a few drops of food coloring or a dye capsule in the toilet tank and wait 15 minutes. If the color shows up in the bowl and the toilet has not been flushed, you have a leak to repair.

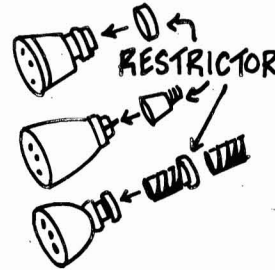


Investigate new flushing devices that replace the ball cock and float. Many of these devices also have built-in leak detectors.



### Sing Shorter Songs

Shorten showers. A shower uses 5-10 gallons a minute. Use a kitchen timer as a reminder. Consider installing flow restrictors and water-saving shower heads. They are inexpensive and easy to install.

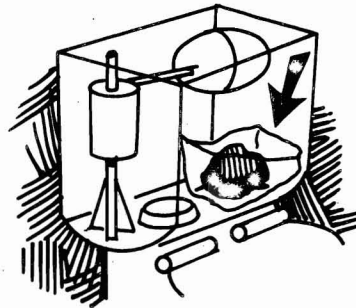


Turn off the water while shampooing or soaping up. A flow cut-off valve can be added to the shower head or purchased as part of the unit.

If you prefer tub baths, 1/4 of a tub should be enough. Put the stopper in the drain right away, rather than waiting for the water to warm up.



**Toilet . . . Water Closet . . . Commode**  
Whatever name you use, the toilet is the single largest water user in the home, accounting for 40 percent of a household's water use.

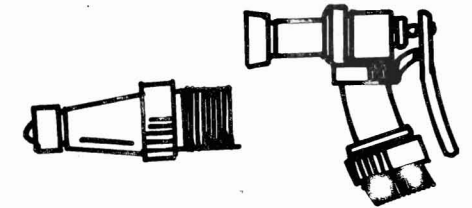


If it's agreeable to family members, flush only when necessary—2 or 3 uses, or when there's solid waste.  
Cut off the top of a plastic bottle, weight down with some stones, and place in the toilet tank away from the flushing mechanism. When you flush, you save the amount of water in the bottle.



### Close the Hose

When washing the car, fill a bucket with warm, soapy water. Sponge the entire car. Then rinse. Do not leave the hose running. Use a cut-off nozzle for easy shut off.



### To Sprinkle or Not to Sprinkle

Lawns do not need regular watering. Less frequent waterings with sprinklers that spray low, broad drops will allow the water to seep into the ground, promoting deeper root systems that better withstand dry weather. Avoid watering too heavily because the soil cannot absorb too much water all at once and the extra will just run off. Leaving the hose running for 4 hours will use about 1,500 gallons of water. Use a timer to avoid overwatering.



Mulch flower and vegetable gardens, shrubs, and trees to hold more moisture in the soil and to control weeds. In the garden, a soaker hose is the most efficient way to water because it puts water close to the roots and reduces evaporation.

