



## Water Conservation

It's time to start thinking about water conservation again as summer approaches. The Town now has a Water Conservation Plan in effect to help us conserve water.

### Water Conservation Plan

The Town of Purcellville Water Conservation Plan was implemented on July 1, 2008 as one of the tasks in the Water Resource Study completed in December 2007. The Conservation Plan included a combination of programmatic measures, most of which were implemented, and ordinance requirement measures, which were not. The programmatic measures implemented include distribution of free retrofit kits containing two each low-flow showerheads and faucet aerators and two packages of leak-detection dye tablets; free low-flow kitchen spray rinse nozzles for restaurants and large kitchens; and rebates for low-flow clothes washers and toilets. Appliances purchased after July 1, 2007 are eligible for rebates.

### Water Conservation Progress

Seventy-three retrofit kits have been delivered to Loudoun Valley High School (LVHS), Patrick Henry College, and 21

residences since the Conservation Plan was implemented. An additional 61 faucet aerators were delivered to LVHS.

Eighteen restaurant spray nozzles have been delivered to restaurants and/or stores in Town. Some large kitchens could not use the spray nozzles because of the process being used.

Fifty-one applications for appliance rebates have been received. Forty-one applications were for clothes washers, seven for toilets and three for both washer and toilet. Five were rejected because not rated or not installed by home owner.

The total estimated water savings to date (4/28/09) based on the number of appliances/devices installed and water factors from the Water Conservation Plan is about 454,000 gallons. The Town is saving an estimated 3,500 gallons per day with the present low-flow appliances/devices installed.

### Current Water Supply

The J.T. Hirst Reservoir is currently (4/28/09) running full and all Town wells are within normal operating range. However, rainfall at Dulles is 3.0 inches below normal since January 1, and continued rain deficiency could result in a shortage of water at some point. Therefore, it is important to use water efficiently as we enter the summer months.

### Using Water Efficiently: Ideas for Residences

Efficient water use can have major environmental, public health, and economic benefits by helping to improve water quality, maintain aquatic ecosystems, and protect drinking water resources. By using water more efficiently and by purchasing more water efficient products, we can also help mitigate the effects of drought. Efficiency measures can also save the homeowner money on their water and energy bills. This list of measures is not meant to be comprehensive, but rather a starting point.

*Bathroom — where over half of all water use inside a house takes place:*

- Do not let the water run while shaving or brushing teeth.
- Take short showers instead of tub baths. Turn off the water while soaping or shampooing.
- If you must use a tub, close the drain before turning on the water and fill the tub only half full. Bathe small children together.
- Never use your toilet as a waste basket.

*Kitchen and Laundry — simple practices that save a lot of water:*

- Keep drinking water in the refrigerator instead of letting the faucet run until the water is cool.
- Wash fruits and vegetables in a basin. Use a vegetable brush.

- Do not use water to defrost frozen foods; thaw in the refrigerator overnight.
- Scrape, rather than rinse, dishes before loading into the dishwasher; wash only full loads.
- Add food wastes to your compost pile instead of using the garbage disposal.
- Wash only full loads of laundry or use the appropriate water level or load size selection on the washing machine.

*Equipment — homes with high-efficiency plumbing fixtures and appliances save about 30% of indoor water use and yield substantial savings on water, sewer, and energy bills:*

- Consider purchasing high-efficiency toilets, or place a plastic container filled with water in the tank of your conventional toilet. Be sure it does not interfere with operation of the toilet's flush mechanisms. See Town web site at [www.purcellvilleva.com](http://www.purcellvilleva.com) and click on [drinking water](#) for links to information on rebates for high-efficiency toilets and clothes washers.
- Consider purchasing a high efficiency washing machine which can save over 50% in laundry water and energy use.
- Install low-flow faucet aerators and showerheads. These are available free at the Town Office to Town residents.
- Repair all leaks. A leaky toilet can waste 200 gallons per day. To detect leaks in the toilet, use dye-detecting tablets or add food coloring to the tank water. If the colored water appears in the bowl, the toilet is leaking. Toilet repair advice

is available on  
<[www.toiletology.com/index.shtml](http://www.toiletology.com/index.shtml)>

**EXIT Disclaimer**

*Landscape Irrigation — depending on climate, up to 75 percent of a home's total water use during the growing season is for outdoor purposes (During drought conditions outdoor watering restrictions may be imposed, so some of the following tips will not apply.):*

- Detect and repair all leaks in irrigation system.
- Use properly treated wastewater for irrigation where available.
- Water the lawn or garden during the coolest part of the day (early morning is best). Do not water on windy days.
- Water trees and shrubs, which have deep root systems, longer and less frequently than shallow-rooted plants that require smaller amounts of water more often. Check with the local extension service for advice on watering needs in your area.
- Set sprinklers to water the lawn or garden only – not the street or sidewalk.
- Use soaker hoses or trickle irrigation systems for trees and shrubs.
- Install moisture sensors on sprinkler systems.
- Use mulch around shrubs and garden plants to reduce evaporation from the soil surface and cut down on weed growth.
- Remove thatch and aerate turf to encourage movement of water to the root zone.

- Raise your lawn mower cutting height – longer grass blades help shade each other, reduce evaporation, and inhibit weed growth.
- Minimize or eliminate fertilizing, which promotes new growth needing additional watering.
- When outdoor use of city or well water is restricted during a drought, use the water from the air conditioning condenser, dehumidifier, bath, or sink on plants or the garden. Don't use water that contains bleach, automatic-dishwashing detergent or fabric softener.

*Other Outdoor Uses:*

- Sweep driveways, sidewalks and steps rather than hosing off.
- Wash the car with water from a bucket, or consider using a commercial car wash that recycles water.
- When using a hose, control the flow with an automatic shut-off nozzle.
- Avoid purchasing recreational water toys which require a constant stream of water.
- Consider purchasing a new water-saving swimming pool filter.
- Use a pool cover to reduce evaporation when pool is not being used.
- Do not install or use ornamental water features unless they recycle the water. Use signs to show the public that water is recycled. Do not operate during a drought.