

Remember the 4 R's: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Repair

Water is essential to life. We need water to grow food, keep clean, provide power, control fire, and even more important, we need it to stay alive. 70% of the Earth's surface is composed of water and less than 1% is available for human use.

In 1993, because of the increase in demand for water access, allocation and services, the United Nations General Assembly designated March 22nd as the first World Water Day. Since then, an International World Water Day is held annually on that date as a means of focusing attention on the importance of freshwater and advocating for the sustainable management of freshwater resources.

Going green is a simple way to reduce the environmental impact and save money. Doing this as a family is easy and every little action is a step to help save the earth.

I have mentioned most of these suggestions before but here is a reminder of things that you and your family can do to conserve water in your home:

1. Check faucets and pipes for leaks - A small drip from a worn faucet washer can waste 20 gallons of water per day. Larger leaks can waste hundreds of gallons.
2. Insulate your water pipes - Cover the pipes with pre-slit foam pipe insulation. It is easy and inexpensive and you will get hot water faster and avoid wasting water while it heats up.
3. Use your water meter to check for hidden water leaks - Read the house water meter before and after a two-hour period when no water is being used. If the meter does not read exactly the same, there is a leak.
4. In the bathroom - Check your toilets for leaks. Put a little food coloring in your toilet tank. If, without flushing, the color begins to appear in the bowl within 30 minutes, you have a leak that should be repaired immediately. Most replacement parts are inexpensive and easy to install. This small change can save 400 - 600 gallons of water in a month.
5. Install inexpensive water-saving, low-flow shower heads and low-flow faucet aerators. They are easy to connect and could save 4,550 gallons of water over a year's time.
6. Spend less time in the shower - A six -minute shower uses approximately 30 to 60 gallons of water.
7. Turn off the water after you wet your toothbrush. Teach your children to do the same; there is no need to keep the water running while brushing your teeth. This small action can save 2,800 gallons annually.
8. With clothes washers, avoid the permanent press cycle, which uses an added 5 gallons of water for the extra rinse. If you are planning to purchase a new machine consider buying a water saving frontload washer.
9. When washing dishes by hand, don't leave the water running for rinsing. If using a dishwasher there is usually no need to pre-rinse the dishes.

10. Reduce water consumption around your house to save money and conserve this precious, non-renewable resource.

Parents, please take the time to teach your children about World Water Day and some of these simple water-saving methods around the home which can make a big difference.

You may want to check the quality of the water that is coming out of your faucets. Home Depot and Sears have a Water Test Kit that is free – you take a water sample from your home faucet and mail it back to them - they will let you know if your water has lead or other contaminants in the water.

Remember “Together we can make a difference.” lesleyhaynes14@yahoo.com