

Water Saving Tips for Schools and Colleges

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS

- Increase employee, faculty, and student awareness of water conservation.
- Conduct contests for employees and students (e.g., posters, slogans, or conservation ideas). Locate suggestion boxes in prominent areas.
- Install signs in all restrooms encouraging water conservation.
- When cleaning with water is necessary, use budgeted amounts.
- Read water meter weekly to monitor success of water conservation efforts.
- Assign an employee to monitor water use and waste.
- Determine the quantity and purpose of water being used.
- Determine other methods of water conservation.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE

- Check water supply system for leaks.
- Turn off any unnecessary flows.
- Repair dripping faucets, showers and continuously running or leaking toilets.
- Install flow reducers and faucet aerators in all plumbing fixtures whenever possible.
- Reduce the water used in toilet flushing by either adjusting the vacuum flush mechanism or installing toilet tank displacement devices (dams, bottles, or bags).
- As appliances or fixtures wear out, replace them with water-saving models.
- Shut off water supply to equipment rooms not in use.
- Minimize the water used in cooling equipment, such as air compressors, in accordance with the manufacturer recommendations.
- Reduce the load on air conditioning units by shutting air conditioning off when and where it is not needed.
- Keep hot water pipes insulated.
- Avoid excessive boiler and air conditioner blow down. Monitor total dissolved solids levels and blow down only when needed.
- Instruct clean-up crew to use less water for mopping.
- Change window cleaning schedule from periodic to an on-call/as required basis.

KITCHEN AND LAUNDRY AREAS

- Turn off the continuous flow used to clean the drain trays of the coffee/milk/soda beverage island; clean the trays only as needed.
- Turn dishwasher off when not in use. Wash full loads only.
Replace spray heads to reduce water flow.
- Recycle rinse water from the dishwasher or re-circulate it to the garbage disposal.
Do not use running water to melt ice or frozen foods. If necessary, use ponded water.
- Use water-conserving ice-makers.
Presoak utensils and dishes in ponded water instead of using a running water rinse.
- Wash vegetables in ponded water; do not let water run in preparation sink.
Use water from steam tables in place of fresh water to wash down the cooking area.

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KITCHEN AND LAUNDRY AREAS

- Reprogram machines to eliminate a rinse or suds cycle, if possible, and if not restricted by health regulations.
- Only wash full loads of clothes or dishes.
- Evaluate wash formula and machine cycles for water use efficiency.

POOL

- Channel splashed-out pool water into landscaping.
- Lower pool water to reduce amount of water splashed out.
- Use a pool cover to reduce evaporation when pool is not being used. Reduce amount of water used to clean pool filters.

EXTERIOR AREAS

- Inventory outdoor water use for landscaped areas.
- Do not water landscape every day; only water when needed. If water restrictions are in effect, adapt your watering schedule accordingly.
- Wash autos, buses, and trucks less often.
- Don't use water to clean sidewalks, driveways, loading docks, and parking lots.
- Consider using brooms or motorized sweepers.
- Avoid landscape fertilizing and pruning stimulating excessive growth.
- Remove weeds and unhealthy plants, so remaining plants can benefit.
- In many cases, older, established plants require only infrequent irrigation. Look for indications of water need, such as wilting, change of color, or dry soils.
- Install soil moisture overrides or timers on sprinkler systems.
- Time watering, when possible, to occur in the early morning or evening when evaporation is lowest.
- Make sure irrigation equipment applies water uniformly.
- Investigate the advantages of installing drip irrigation systems.
- Mulch around plants reducing evaporation and discouraging weeds.
- Remove thatch and aerate turf, encouraging movement of water to the root zone.
- Avoid runoff and make sure sprinklers cover just the lawn or garden, not sidewalks, driveways, or gutters.
- Do not water on windy days.

(SOURCE: Maryland Department of the Environment)