

IS IT A CONTRADICTION TO ASK PEOPLE TO RUN WATER?

Many times during the course of the year, we are asked questions regarding our policy for conserving water. While it is imperative to conserve water, there are specific instances when letting water run takes precedence over conservation. Here is a list of circumstances which require the use of water:

1 **FREEZING WEATHER**

During extended cold spells, frost depths can penetrate the ground beyond the depths of water lines, encasing the waterline with frozen earth. The only way to prevent losing water service is to allow water to keep water running through the pipes. Listen to the local media during winter months for warnings. We'll keep you informed of local conditions.



2 **FIRE HYDRANT TESTS & FLUSHING**

It is vital to know the readiness of fire hydrants by making sure there is adequate water to them. Each year the Fire Department tests the City's fire hydrants to make sure that they are functioning properly. The Water Department performs periodic testing of hydrants to determine the available flow from them.



3 **ROUTINE STREET MAINTENANCE**

At times you may see a water truck driving down a city street, spraying water to the side. This use serves a specific purpose. These trucks dampen dust and dirt particles on the street surface. Street sweepers follow the trucks, picking up the debris on the side of the street. The moist street surface helps the sweepers perform their tasks without stirring up dust. This routine maintenance is environmentally friendly, preventing debris and dirt from finding its way into natural waterways.

These uses of water serve necessary functions and are not considered a waste of water.



THE VALUE OF OUR WATER

It was Ben Franklin who once stated, "When the well's dry, we know the worth of water." Let's face it. There are few things as important to a community as drinking water. We don't often take time to think about the value that a safe, reliable supply of water offers us. Tap water offers us:



- **Public Health Protection**
- **Quality of Life**
- **Fire Protection**
- **Support for the Economy**

With such a valuable resource, it is essential that we remain good stewards of our drinking water supply.

OUR WATER SUPPLY

We are blessed to be situated atop a groundwater supply, the East Snake River Plain aquifer (ESPA), that is approximately the same size in surface area as Lake Erie. The aquifer stretches from Ashton on the north to beyond Twin Falls on the south. Since so many communities share the same source, it is necessary to ensure that there is enough to go around.



Although the ESPA contains a large amount of pure water, it must be capable of meeting the needs of a variety of differing interests. All groundwater users rely on the ESPA, whether it be for indoor residential use, agricultural irrigation, or industrial use.

WHAT WE'RE DOING INSIDE

The best way to achieve results is to lead by example. The City of Idaho Falls has begun a concerted effort to reduce waste of water.

Water Division personnel are creating an inventory of faucets, toilets, and other water fixtures in all City-owned buildings. This identifies all fixtures that can either be upgraded or equipped with water-saving devices.

WHAT WE'RE DOING OUTSIDE

While small changes indoors can help save water, real water savings can be made outdoors. The majority of our annual water consumption is a result of outdoor watering.

The Water Division is also working with the City Parks Department, local schools, and churches to modify water use. Implemented changes are already saving the City millions of gallons of water each month!



WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

The City of Idaho Falls is asking for your assistance to help us conserve water. Water conservation is more than just a principle to be followed, it's a frame of mind and a practice to be lived. Educate yourself on conservation measures and share information that you find with others.

There are many internet websites that have been created that can help you find new ways to conserve water. Here are just a couple to visit:

- www.awwa.org/waterwiser
- www.h2ouse.org
- www.epa.gov/watersense

This brochure includes numerous ideas and hints that can be utilized by any homeowner to conserve water both indoors and outdoors. Most are inexpensive, and the cumulative effect of everyone pitching in can ensure that we efficiently use our greatest natural resource . . . **WATER!**

WE ARE HERE TO SERVE YOU

If you have any questions or comments regarding the content of this report, please contact:

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Water Conservation



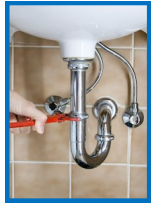
Every Drop Counts!



Indoor Methods

#1: Locate & Repair Leaks

Homes can waste more than 10% of indoor water use through leaks. Whether a noticeable drip from a faucet or the silent overflow from a toilet, these small amounts of water can really add up over time. A leaky faucet with a drip every second can waste 2,700 gallons of water every year. To check for a silent leak in your toilet, add several drops of food coloring in your tank. If the water in the bowl is tinted after 15 minutes, your toilet has a leak. Materials to repair minor leaks are inexpensive and available at any hardware store.



#2: Change Old Fixtures

Many gallons of water go down the drain each year by old, inefficient toilets and clothes washers. Old toilets can use 5 gallons of water each flush while newer models use only 1.6 gallons. Modern shower heads efficiently operate while using less water. New front load clothes washers require much less water than older models to accomplish the same task. Replace outdated appliances with more efficient ones. Although more costly than other alternatives, your appliance selection may qualify you for a 36-month, no interest loan from Idaho Falls Power.



#3: Sweep Floor Surfaces

Sometimes there's no substitute for "elbow grease." Be sure to use a broom when cleaning the floor of your garage, shop, or patio. Utilizing water to clean a surface that can be swept is a tragic waste. Another option would be to use a leaf blower to rid the area of nuisance dirt and debris.



CONSERVATION METHODS

Indoor Methods

#4: Don't Let Water Run

Unnecessarily running water while performing certain tasks wastes water every day. While shaving, fill the sink with water to clean your razor rather than leaving the water running. Turning off water while brushing your teeth is another task where water can be conserved. These simple measures will not only help conserve water, they will also decrease the amount of sewage treated at the wastewater treatment plant.



#5: Install Saving Devices

Small, simple and inexpensive devices can be purchased and installed on older water fixtures to conserve water. Toilet tanks can be fitted with fill cycle diverters which redirect water from the overflow tube to the tank during the refill cycle. Toilet tank bladders can be installed inside the toilet tank to reduce the volume of water used with each flush. Aerators can be installed on faucets to reduce the volume of water used while the faucet is running. Each of these inexpensive items can save hundreds of gallons a month!



Additional Indoor Measures

- Fix leaks early. Small leaks will eventually become large leaks if left alone.
- Only run full loads of laundry or dirty dishes. Some washers use the same amount whether or not the load is completely full. If your washer is equipped with a load size selector switch, use it when washing partial loads.
- Educate yourself on water conservation!



Outdoor Methods

#1: Learn to Use Your Timer

Automated sprinkler systems can waste a lot of water if not properly maintained. Timing patterns for automated systems should be adjusted seasonally to prevent overwatering during spring and fall months. Some experts even recommend adjusting them on a monthly basis. Timers should also be turned off during stormy weather to prevent watering in the rain. Timers can be equipped with a rain sensor that will automatically turn off the timer when it rains.



#2: Adjust Your Lawn Mower

During summer months, raise your lawn mower to its tallest height setting. This will allow your grass to grow taller, in turn shading the lawn's roots. Your grass will not require as much water and will be less prone to scorching from summer heat. Also consider using a mulching blade. This leaves the grass clippings on the lawn, helping retain moisture in your lawn and relieving you of the burden of raking and bagging the clippings.



#3: Install Drip Systems

Place the water exactly where you need it by using a drip system. These low flow systems are easily added to an existing system and use a fraction of the water that traditional sprinklers do. Whether it is drip tubing, bubbler fittings, or small spray heads, the water is placed right where the plants need it without wasteful overspray.



Outdoor Methods

#4: Don't Overwater Lawns

Summer is the perfect time to give your lawn a little bit of tough love. Healthy lawns should only be watered every 2-3 days. If you've overwatered your lawn, it may go into shock once you try to reduce your watering. Don't worry though. As your lawn learns to survive on less water, the roots will grow deeper, providing you with a heartier lawn, more resistant to summer heat.



#5: Check for System Leaks

Periodically check your sprinkler system for leaks. Since most systems operate at night, homeowners do not typically notice if there is a leak on their sprinklers. Once a month, use your timer to manually run each station, checking to see if any leaks surface. If the ground is abnormally soft or wet in certain areas, it may also indicate a leak. Repair any leaks right away.



Additional Outdoor Measures

- Use a hose-end sprayer or nozzle when using a hose. Remember, watering with an open hose is considered a waste of water and is a violation of City code!
- If you irrigate with a hose, install a timer on your hose connection. These timers are battery operated and will prevent you from overwatering if you have to run errands or simply forget to turn off the water.
- Plant water resistant grass, plants and shrubs.
- Adjust sprinklers to not water concrete or pavement.

