



WATER CONSERVATION

8

WATER

Water is a valuable, fundamental resource that should not be wasted. Eventually it will recycle itself, but the clean water used in homes has limitations. If each person uses only what is needed, the natural water supply will always be adequate.



Indirect benefits arising from water conservation lead to energy savings related to supply, treatment and process costs (water treatment plants) and reduced disposal costs (wastewater treatment plants) etc. Water conservation also has an energy saving in terms of the reduction of hot water being wasted.

Generally, four destination points in the home are recognised as end uses for hot water: taps, showers, dishwashers and washing machines

KITCHEN AND LAUNDRY TIPS



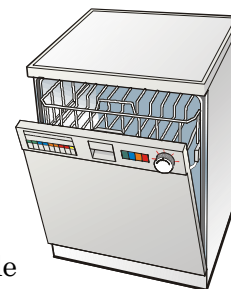
In the kitchen:

- Don't leave the tap running when rinsing the dishes
- Keep tap washer in good shape or use washer less taps.
- Use a basin when washing vegetables. This water can be re-used to water plants.



Dishwashers

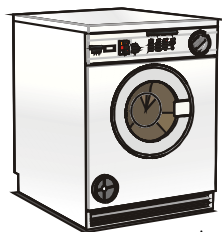
If properly used, an efficient dishwasher can consume less energy than washing dishes by hand, particularly when you only operate the dishwasher with full loads. The biggest cost of operating a dishwasher comes from the energy required to heat the water. We do not advise that the water heater temperature is reduced. However use shorter cycles if possible. They require less water, thereby reducing the energy cost.



If you are planning to purchase a new dishwasher, check the Energy labelling Guide and compare the running costs among brands. Dishwashers fall into one of two categories: compact capacity or standard capacity. Although compact-capacity dishwashers may appear to be more energy efficient, they hold fewer dishes and may force you to use the appliance more frequently than a standard model. Therefore buy to suit your needs.



Washing Machines



Like dishwashers, much of the operating cost of washing machines is associated with the energy needed to heat the water. Unlike dishwashers, washing machines do not require a minimum temperature for optimum cleaning. If possible use the lower temperature setting.

Washing only full loads is another good rule of thumb for reducing hot-water consumption in clothes washers.

As you would for dishwashers, consult the Energy Labelling guide when shopping for a new washing machine. Select a machine that allows you to adjust the water temperature and water levels for the size of the load.



Increasing water-heating system efficiency

Reducing hot-water usage is primarily a matter of common sense and exerting a little extra effort not to be wasteful. Following are a few low cost tips.

- Lower your water heater thermostat
- Insulate hot water pipes and the storage cylinder
- Use off-peak power to heat water

BATHROOMS



Following are a few tips on how to save water in the bathroom:

- ***Swap your bath for a shower.*** The average bath uses 80 litres of water while a shower only uses around 30 litres.
- Install water-saving showerheads or flow restrictors. Most 'older style' showerheads use twenty litres of water, or more, a minute, while ten litres is actually enough for a refreshing cleansing shower. So, if you have a 7-minute shower everyday, that's 51,000 litres per year. Up to half of this could be saved with an efficient showerhead.
- Limit the length of showers to two-three minutes.
- Replace washer on ball cock in cistern and storage tank if any overflow of water is noticed.
- When replacing fixtures, install water-conserving models. The price is about the same.
- Turn off the tap while brushing your teeth. Use only enough water to wet the brush and rinse your mouth.
- Teach children to turn off taps after use.
- Check taps for leaks. Even a small leak can waste thousands of litres per month.
- Replace your old inefficient WC with a new low flush model. The older model toilets will consume 20 litres of water while the average flush for a toilet is 9 litres. Now available on the market are toilets with a 6-litres flush. Without replacing the toilet a brick can be placed in the cistern, which would reduce the consumption of the water. Care should be taken not to interfere with the flushing mechanism of the toilet.



TAPS

Because of the different uses of bathroom and kitchen taps, you may need to have different water flow rates in each location. Kitchen taps may require higher flow rates than bathroom taps. Self-closing and spray taps can save water. Self-closing taps are adjusted for length and time of flow. Tap aerators restrict the amount of water going through the tap, but adds bubbles so the flow appears the same.

IN THE GARDEN

Use a barrel to collect rainwater for use around the garden and washing the car. (Take care that the barrel is covered with suitable wiring to avoid accidents).

Lawn sprinklers are discouraged and must never be left on over-night. Watering gardens and hanging baskets by a hand-held watering can uses less water than a hose.



**Mayo Energy Agency,
Arran Place, Ballina, Co. Mayo.**

Tel.: (096) 76113/4

Fax.: (096) 76199

E-Mail: mayonenergy@eircom.net

Web: mayoenergy.ie