



AQUARION
Water Company

Stewards of the Environment

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Aquarion offers water conservation tips

Water is a precious natural resource, so even though reservoirs in the Greater Bridgeport area are at normal levels, Aquarion Water Company encourages its customers to conserve during warm weather months.

There are numerous ways to accomplish this. For example, according to information from the Environmental Protection Agency, the average single-family suburban home uses up to 70 percent of its water for outdoor purposes in warm weather. However, some experts estimate more than half that water is wasted due to evaporation, wind, or overwatering. To avoid such waste, customers can follow these tips:

- Water lawns or gardens in the early morning, instead of midday, to reduce evaporation
- Use sprinklers that produce droplets, not mist, or use soaker hoses or trickle irrigation for trees and shrubs
- Ensure sprinklers are watering lawns and gardens only, not sidewalks, driveways and roads
- Raise lawn mower blades to at least three inches; taller grass shades itself, is healthier and requires less water
- Use a broom to remove debris from sidewalks, patios and driveways, rather than hosing them down
- Apply mulch around trees and plants to help reduce evaporation and control water-stealing weeds
- Delay car washing, or use a car wash that recycles its water.



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Inside the home

To conserve water inside the home, customers can follow some simple measures:

- Take 5-minute showers
- Run washing machines and dishwashers only when they have full loads
- Turn off the faucet when brushing teeth or shaving
- Place a closed container full of water in the toilet tank
- Fill the kitchen sink with water to soak dishes before placing them in the dishwasher, instead of rinsing dishes individually
- Keep a pitcher of water in the refrigerator for drinks, rather than running the faucet until the water is cold
- Repair all leaks. To detect toilet leaks, place a few drops of food coloring in the tank; if the color shows up in the bowl, the tank mechanism needs repair.
- Install water-saving shower heads and low-flow faucet aerators.

Landscaping

The Environmental Protection Agency advocates a type of landscaping known as xeriscapes to benefit the environment and save water.

Xeriscapes incorporate plants that are native to the area. Once established, they will require very little additional water beyond normal rainfall. Also, because the plants are adapted to local soils and climatic conditions, they commonly are more resistant to pests and disease and do not require fertilizer, which is environmentally friendlier.

The EPA also advises using mulch in xeriscapes to aid water retention. Applying mulch around the base of plants minimizes water evaporation, reduces weed growth, moderates soil temperatures, and prevents erosion. Organic mulches also improve soil condition as they decompose. Rock mulches, on the other hand, are not plant-friendly in sunny areas, as they radiate large amounts of heat and promote water loss that can lead to scorching.

Water xeriscape plants only as needed. Initially, the plants will require regular pruning, weeding, fertilization, pest control, and irrigation. However, as the water-efficient landscape matures, it will require less maintenance and water.

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Rain Barrels

Rain barrels collect water during storms and hold it until it's time to water plants, wash cars or take on other outdoor cleaning tasks.

This untreated, "soft" water is ideal for flower beds, organic vegetable gardens, and other outdoor uses. And it's free!

The barrels, which usually are about 3 feet high and hold 55 gallons, are placed directly beneath a downspout and collect water from rooftop run-off during rain storms — a quarter-inch rainfall on the typical roof will fill a barrel.

Rain barrels come with a spigot near the bottom for a hose to fill buckets or watering cans. A second spigot near the top is for release of excess water during heavy rainstorms, to disperse the overflow away from the home's foundations.

Rain barrels not only help reduce consumption of tap water, but they also reduce stormwater run-off, which can carry pollutants like sediment, oil, grease and bacteria into ponds or rivers. Widespread use benefits municipalities as well, because the reduced run-off will decrease the burden on water treatment facilities and municipal drainage systems during storms.

Many hardware stores and nurseries sell rain barrels, which also can be found online. When selecting one to purchase, look for safety features to prevent children and pets from getting inside, and screens to keep insects and debris out.

For more about water conservation, visit www.aquarionwater.com

Aquarion Water Company is the public water supply provider for more than 590,000 people in 42 communities throughout Connecticut, as well as five in Massachusetts and three in New Hampshire. It is the largest investor-owned water utility in New England and among the seven largest in the U.S. Based in Bridgeport, it has been in the public water supply business since 1857. Across its operations, Aquarion strives to act as a responsible steward of the environment and to assist the communities it serves in promoting sustainable practices.

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