

Water Conservation in Our Region

We can be proud of our community's efforts to conserve water.

The residents of this area are nationally recognized for their positive approach to water conservation. Continuing development of the use of reclaimed water to replace fresh water irrigation is a major step towards water conservation and environmental protection. In 2003, water was regionalized under Greater Vernon Services. The Master Water Plan helps to plan for future water demands in our community. All domestic customers in the Greater Vernon Service were metered as of March 2005. Low flow toilets are required in all new construction throughout the area. Agricultural metering is the next step in demand side management for water and is being piloted in 2005.

The Water Stewardship Committee has been active in promoting water efficiency and conservation through school programs, newspaper articles, mall displays and other initiatives. An interpretive xeriscape display can now be seen at the Vernon RCMP detachment. We can be proud of our efforts to date. But remember, using our water wisely will help us protect our environment and reduce the amount of water and wastewater we need to treat.

It's easy to take water for granted, especially in an area surrounded by lakes.

We invite your active participation. If you want more information, or want to get involved, please contact:

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Water Stewardship COMMITTEE



51 Ways to Conserve Water

Think Water Every Drop Counts

Water Efficiency Guide

But remember, the next time you turn on the tap, the water has been treated to provide you with safe drinking water. When it goes down the drain, it again has to be treated with other waste before it is discharged into the environment.

Some small changes in our daily water habits can realize big savings:

MONEY

Processing water is an expensive job. Reducing water use can delay upsizing municipal water and sewage systems.

ENERGY

20% of a typical utility bill is for heating water in the bathroom, laundry and kitchen.

ENVIRONMENT

Reducing introduction of chlorine and other chemicals to the environment.

The 4R's of Wise Water Use

REDUCE **REPAIR** **RETROFIT** **REUSE**

We can make small changes in our water use habits to reduce the amount we use. Regularly check toilets, pipes, and faucets. Even a minor leak can waste 66 litres a day. This means replacing or adapting an older, less efficient fixture or appliance. Consider water reuse technology, like using grey water for irrigation and toilet flushing.

The average Canadian uses about 120,000 Litres of water per year.

Indoor Use

Outdoor Use

Kitchen

Bathroom

Laundry Room

Lawns, Gardens, and More

REDUCE

- Operate dishwasher only when full.
- Pre-rinsing only heavily soiled dishes.
- Follow instruction manual for proper loading of dishwashers.
- When washing dishes by hand partially fill one sink with water to rinse instead of running water.
- Keep a bottle of drinking water in the fridge.
- Partially fill a basin to clean and rinse to clean fruit and vegetables.
- Defrost food overnight in the fridge.

- Do not use toilets as a garbage can.
- Reduce water per flush. Displace water using a plastic bottle with a tight lid, filled with sand to weight it. (Do not put the bottle where it will interfere with flushing device).
- Consider flushing only for solid waste.
- Try limiting your showers to 3 to 5 minutes.
- Use shut off valve on shower while sudsing up (if available).
- Avoid shaving in shower.
- Fill tub only 1/4 full.
- Use a stopper in the sink with a small amount of water when shaving.
- Use a glass to rinse when brushing teeth, instead of allowing the tap to run.

- Wash only full loads or set your washer level indicator to use only as much water as is really necessary.
- Use shortest cycle possible.
- Use cold water for all but very soiled clothes or whites.



REPAIR

- Regularly check faucets, taps, and fittings on your dishwasher for leaks and replace them when necessary.



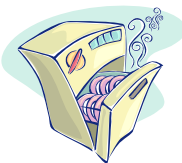
- Check for leaks in toilet. Put a few drops of food colour into your toilet tank. If, the colour begins to appear in the bowl after a few minutes, you may have a leak.
- Repair overflow pipe leaks by adjusting float arm until water level is 1.5 cm below top of overflow pipe.
- Repair defective plunger ball and outlet valve at bottom of tank.
- Check faucets for leaks. Replace washers if needed.

- Regularly check faucets, taps, hoses, and fittings on your clothing washer and replace them when necessary.



RETROFIT

- When purchasing a new dishwasher, select units with sud-savers and other low consumption features.



- Utilizing early-stop devices. Use toilet tank dams.
- Convert to low flush toilets
- New low flow shower heads, use half the water of standard shower heads.
- Install aerators on your faucets.
- When renovating or building, upgrade to low flow fixtures.



- Check the amount of water your clothes washer uses. A regular cycle can vary from 113 to 188 litres.
- When purchasing a new clothes washer, select units with sud-savers and other low consumption features.



REUSE

- Grey water (water from laundry, baths, showers, and sinks) can be used to water plants, shrubs and ground cover.
- Reuse water from cleaning and cooking fruits and vegetables to water plants.



Highly treated wastewater in Vernon is reused on agricultural, forestry and recreational property in the Commonage area.

New regulations in B.C. permit reclaimed water, meeting certain standards, to be used for toilet flushing, lawn and vegetable irrigation, and many other urban, agricultural and recreational uses. Over 4 billion litres of reclaimed water is used in this way per year.

REDUCE

- Try not to scalp your lawns when you mow them. Longer grass (5 cm) holds moisture better and shades its roots.
- The amount of water your lawn and garden needs will depend on the weather. Try to irrigate only once a week. Under very dry conditions you may need to water more often but still no more than once every four days.
- Three cm of water per week is all your lawn needs. More is not better. (This can be determined by placing a tuna can under the sprinkler. Time how long it takes to fill 3/4 of the can. That's how long you should sprinkle your lawn per week.)
- Water in the early morning or late evening. This will reduce water loss to evaporation and sun burning plants and grass.
- When planting a lawn consider the new low water use turfs.
- Give your car a sponge bath, not a shower. Use a bucket and sponge to wash car. Rinse with a trigger nozzle on your hose.
- Use your broom to clean sidewalks and driveways.

REPAIR

- Check hoses and fittings for leaks.
- Some sprinklers require maintenance such as lubrication to use water efficiently.
- Ensure sprinkler filters are cleaned and nozzles are not clogged.

RETROFIT

- Low spray patterns that suits the size and shape of your lawn.
- Try an automatic timer that delivers at the right time of day and the appropriate amount.
- For permanent installations, drip irrigation systems are a great choice.
- install rain sensors on automatic systems to shut off system during rainy periods.
- Consider planting drought tolerant plants.
- Install Xeriscaping (Water Efficient Landscaping) This is a creative planning and design approach for landscaping. A predominant use of low maintenance and drought resistant plant and grass varieties, and the placement of plants in appropriate areas.

REUSE



A slow steady drip wastes 1600 litres per month



Leaks account for 14% of all indoor water use



Leaking toilets can waste 400 litres per day



A low flow shower head can save up to 40,000L per year



Plants only require 3cm of water each week

