



# Fact Sheet

## The Drought – Making a Difference Indoors

Water is a critical part of California’s way of life. Our economy, our environment and our day-to-day lifestyle need water to flourish. But our water is limited--especially this year. The lack of rain and snow mean that our water supply will be challenged to meet the state's needs. Conservation will help us stretch the water that we do have.

California is suffering from a drought so we cannot afford to waste any water. The good news is there are lots of simple ways to reduce the amount of water that we use at home, both inside and outside. If we all work together, we can make a difference for California’s future.

### In the home

Water is essential to each of us every day. But it’s a limited resource, so we all need to rethink the way we use water on a daily basis. By following these water-saving tips inside your home, you can help save water every day:

#### Laundry Room

- Use the washing machine for full loads only to save water and energy
- Install a water-efficient clothes washer Save: 16 Gallons/Load
- Washing dark clothes in cold water saves water and energy, and helps your clothes retain their color.

#### Kitchen

- Run the dishwasher only when full to save water and energy.
- Install a water- and energy-efficient dishwasher. Save: 3 to 8 Gallons/Load.
- Install aerators on the kitchen faucet to reduce flows to less than 1 gallon per minute.
- When washing dishes by hand, don’t let the water run. Fill one basin with wash water and the other with rinse water.
- Dishwashers typically use less water than washing dishes by hand.
- If your dishwasher is new, cut back on rinsing. Newer models clean more thoroughly than older ones.



- Soak pots and pans instead of letting the water run while you scrape them clean.
- Use the garbage disposal sparingly. Instead, compost vegetable food waste and save gallons every time.
- Wash your fruits and vegetables in a pan of water instead of running water from the tap.
- Don't use running water to thaw food. Defrost food in the refrigerator.
- Keep a pitcher of drinking water in the refrigerator instead of running the tap.
- Cook food in as little water as possible. This also helps it retain more nutrients.
- Select the proper pan size for cooking. Large pans may require more cooking water than necessary.
- If you accidentally drop ice cubes, don't throw them in the sink. Drop them in a house plant instead.
- Collect the water you use while rinsing fruit and vegetables. Use it to water house plants.

## Bathroom

- Install low-flow shower heads. Save: 2.5 Gallons
- Take five minute showers instead of 10 minute showers. Save: 12.5 gallons with a low flow showerhead, 25 gallons with a standard 5.0 gallon per minute showerhead.
- Fill the bathtub halfway or less. Save: 12 Gallons
- When running a bath, plug the bathtub before turning on the water. Adjust the temperature as the tub fills.
- Install aerators on bathroom faucets. Save: 1.2 Gallons Per Person/Day
- Turn water off when brushing teeth or shaving. Save: Approximately 10 Gallons/Day
- Install a high-efficiency toilet. Save: 19 Gallons Per Person/Day
- Don't use the toilet as a wastebasket.
- Be sure to test your toilet for leaks at least once a year.
- Put food coloring in your toilet tank. If it seeps into the bowl without flushing, there's a leak. Fix it and start saving gallons.
- Consider buying a dual-flush toilet. It has two flush options: a half-flush for liquid waste and a full-flush for solid waste.
- Plug the sink instead of running the water to rinse your razor and save up to 300 gallons a month.
- Turn off the water while washing your hair and save up to 150 gallons a month.
- When washing your hands, turn the water off while you lather.
- Take a (short) shower instead of a bath. A bathtub can use up to 70 gallons of water.

**For more information on ways to save water outdoors, visit [saveourh2o.org](http://saveourh2o.org)**

**To find out more about the Water Board's work to address the drought, see:  
[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water\\_issues/programs/drought/index.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/drought/index.shtml)**