

wellcare[®] information for you about

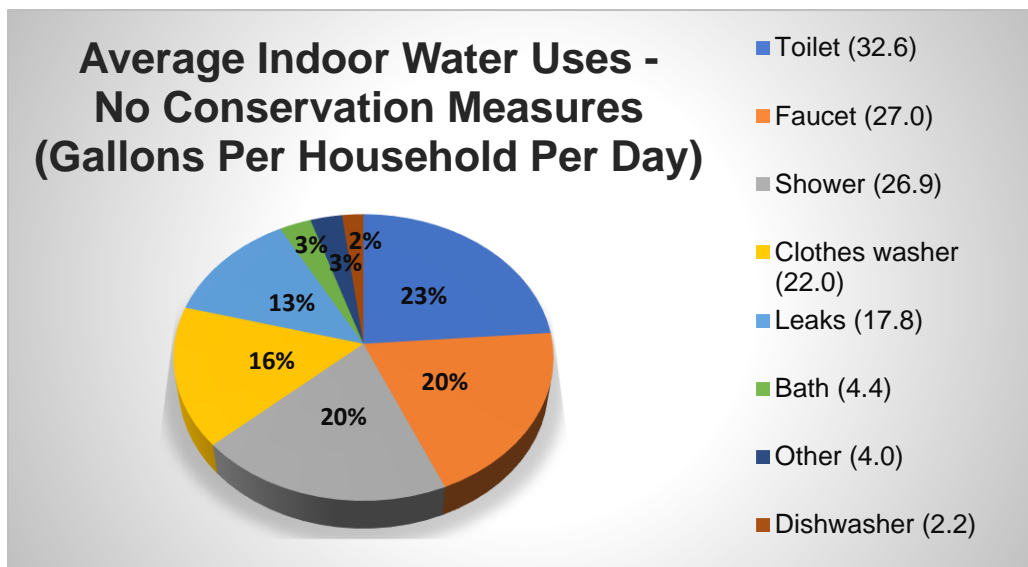
WATER CONSERVATION

Let us be honest, drought occurs somewhere in our nation every year stressing our resources. Many areas face serious water shortages because water is being used faster than it can be replenished naturally. Some local and state governments have declared mandatory water conservation measures, even for private well owners.

You may be thinking, "I have a newer home with efficient water appliances I should not have to worry." Not the case! New homes typically have more efficient fixtures and use less water, but they usually have more fixtures – bathrooms, garbage disposal, whirlpool tub, hot tub, or swimming pool – that consume greater quantities of water. This information sheet will help all well owners with all styles of homes take steps to cut water use, safeguard their drinking water supply, save money, and protect the environment. Trust us, you do not want to wait until a prolonged drought or water shortage creates a water emergency like a dry well!

Average Water Use

The average family uses more than 300 gallons of water per day at home and 70 percent of this use occurs indoors. Efforts to reduce water consumption are especially important if you have a low yielding well (less than 5 gallons a minute), live in a drought region, or an area of rapid development where groundwater supplies are stressed. The following chart shows average indoor water uses with no conservation measures to help you make an informed decision on where you can save water! And keep an eye on the Drought Monitor map throughout the dry months.



Source: Water Research Foundation Residential End Uses of Water, Version 2-2016

Conduct a Household Water Audit

A household water audit is an evaluation of how much water is used and how much water can be saved. This is important for well owners since there is not a water bill that provides this information. Conducting a water audit involves calculating water use first. This [Water Footprint Calculator](#) can help. It is very thorough and at the end you can have the report emailed to you. Compare your results with the chart on the previous page. Consider reasons for high levels of water use. Are fixtures leaking or appliances old and inefficient? Or is it the way you use the water, with long showers and many half-full loads of laundry? Continue your water audit by reading through the following simple ways to save water in and around your home.

Check for Leaks

The average household can have leaks that account for nearly 10,000 gallons of water wasted every year and ten percent of homes have leaks that waste 90 gallons or more per day. Common types of leaks found in the home are worn toilet flappers, dripping faucets, and outside spigots. These types of leaks are often easy to fix, requiring only a few tools and hardware that can pay for themselves in water savings.

Some tips for finding leaks:

- Look at your water usage during a colder month, such as January or February. If a family of four exceeds 12,000 gallons per month, there may be serious leaks.
- Find toilet leaks by placing a drop of food coloring in the toilet tank – do not flush! If any color shows up in the bowl after 10 minutes, you have a leak. (Be sure to flush immediately after the experiment to avoid staining the tank.)
- Check sinks for dripping faucets and water on the outside of pipe fittings.
- Visually inspect your well head/cap, pressure tank, water treatment, and other above ground well components for flowing water or standing water.
- Look for any unexplained wet spots in your yard along the route from the well to your home.
- Check outside hose bibs, hoses, and sprinkler heads for broken parts and leaking water.

These [How-To Videos](#) can help you find and fix leaks. When in doubt, call your licensed well contractor, plumber, or irrigation service for assistance and repairs.

Use Better Technology

By using more efficient fixtures, well owners can cut their water use. Conserve water by using technology to retrofit or replace inefficient water appliances and fixtures. Many are very low-cost, such as a flow restricting showerhead or a simple displacement device for water in the toilet tank, such as a gallon jug. Or consider installing high efficiency clothes washer and dishwasher and low-flow toilets. These appliances may have higher initial cost, but this is recovered over time by savings in water and energy. [Find out how much you can save](#) and a [list of efficient products](#).

Contact your local plumber and/or the plumbing and appliance salespeople at hardware and home improvement stores for help in selecting and installing these products.

Change Behavior

Small changes in behavior can also reap big benefits in water conservation and save money by reducing wear and tear on your well and septic system. Just think about the hundreds of gallons of water you are pumping from your well each day to your home then that water is released from your home which goes to your septic system. These heavy uses will eventually cause expensive repair or replacement and exhaust groundwater resources. Limit demand by spreading out your daily and weekly water-uses, such as bathing, watering the garden, and washing dishes or clothes. Remember, even seemingly small measures can save thousands of gallons of water per year. Try using some (or all!) these methods to save:

Inside

- Turn off the tap when brushing teeth, shaving, or scrubbing.
- Use the sink, not running water, to rinse your razor.
- Do not use the toilet as a wastebasket.
- Take shorter showers.
- Keep a pitcher of drinking water in the refrigerator rather than running the tap.
- Run the clothes washer and dishwasher only with full loads.

Outside

- DO NOT use your well to fill pools, hot tubs, or for other large uses. Use a water delivery service instead.
- Water during the coolest part of the day, preferably in early morning, to reduce evaporation. Most established lawns and gardens need just one hour of deep watering once a week to remain healthy. Remember to water just the grass, not the pavement!
- Set the lawn mower to 3 inches. Longer grass allows less evaporation and shades the roots from drying out so quickly.
- In the garden, switch from sprinklers to soaker hoses.
- Look for native perennial plants and grass seeds at the garden center. These require much less water, particularly in drier climates, than tropical annuals.
- Use mulch to retain water in the soil and reduce thirsty weeds.
- Fit all hoses with a sprayer to control flow.
- Use a broom, not a hose, to clear debris from sidewalks.
- Wash the car with soap and water from a bucket.

Information on Water Conservation

Contact your licensed well contractor, plumber, septic service provider, or the wellcare® Hotline for additional measures you can take in and around your home to protect your well, well water, and septic system. And check out these websites:

Regional Water Providers Consortium. Water Conservation. <https://www.regionalh2o.org/water-conservation>.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. WaterSense. <https://www.epa.gov/watersense>.

The Water Research Foundation. <https://www.waterrf.org/>.



Information to help maintain and protect your water well system:

wellcare® is a program of the [Water Systems Council \(WSC\)](http://www.watersystemscouncil.org). WSC is the only national organization solely focused on protecting the health and water supply of more than 13 million households nationwide who depend on private wells.

This publication is one of more than 100 wellcare® information sheets available FREE at www.watersystemscouncil.org.

Well owners and others with questions about wells and well water can contact the wellcare® Hotline at 1-888-395-1033 or visit www.wellcarehotline.org to fill out a contact form or chat with us live!

JOIN THE WELLCARE® WELL OWNERS NETWORK!

By joining the FREE wellcare® Well Owners Network, you will receive regular information on how to maintain your well and protect your well water.

Contact us at 1-888-395-1033 or visit www.wellcarehotline.org to join!