

# AGUA ACTION

## A Guide to Water Conservation in New Mexico

Water Use and Conservation Bureau • New Mexico Office of the State Engineer

### Think Water!

Take a second to think about water in New Mexico. There isn't much water here, but our thirst for it is growing every day. New Mexicans use more than 120 billion gallons of water per year for household use. That's about 180 gallons per person each day. By saving water today, we can help ensure a healthy and abundant water supply for tomorrow. Do your part—**take agua action!**



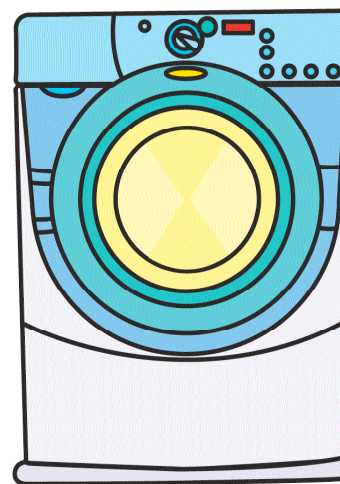
### Agua Action Indoors

#### BATHROOM

- Install a water-efficient toilet. You'll save two to five gallons of water each time you flush. And flush the toilet less. It's not always necessary to flush after every use.
- Install a low-flow showerhead. You can reduce the flow of water from the usual 5 gallons per minute down to 2.5 gallons or even less.
- Install a low-flow faucet that uses 2.5 gallons or less per minute.
- Keep showers short. Because water is scarce in our dry state, turn the water off while shampooing and soaping—then turn it back on to rinse off.

#### KITCHEN & LAUNDRY

- Choose a water-efficient clothes washer. You'll save about 15 gallons for every load of clothes you wash.
  - No matter what kind of clothes washer you have, you'll save water if you wash only full loads.
  - Install a water-efficient dishwasher and save 7 or more gallons for every load of dishes.
    - Use the automatic dishwasher only for full loads.
    - Install a low-flow faucet in your kitchen.
- If you wash dishes by hand, don't leave the water running while rinsing. Remember, an older faucet uses up to 5 gallons of water a minute.
- Consider installing an on-demand or a recirculating hot water heater. Hot water is normally wasted when running the tap or shower for hot water. Use the collected water for hand-washing laundry or watering plants.



### Be A Water Detective: Find and Fix Leaks

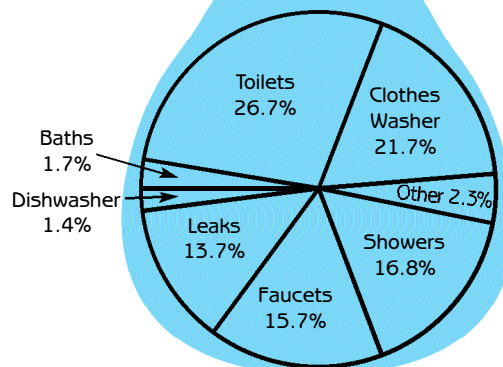
A slow, steady faucet drip can waste 15 to 20 gallons per day; a faster drip can waste 100 gallons or more! Many faucet leaks can be repaired with an inexpensive washer. Also check for toilet leaks, which can silently waste hundreds of gallons of water. Outdoor leaks can be extremely wasteful, too. Repair broken sprinklers and leaky drip lines.

### Three Simple Ways to Save Water Today\*

Activity	You Could Save	New Mexico Could Save
Shorten your shower to 5 minutes	25 gallons per day	37.5 million gallons per day
Install a low-flow 2.5 gallons-per-minute showerhead	25 gallons per day	37.5 million gallons per day
Shorten your shower AND install a low-flow showerhead	50 gallons per day	75 million gallons per day

\* Savings compared to a 10-minute shower with a high-flow showerhead

### Where is Water Used Indoors?



Source: Amy Vickers, Handbook of Water Use and Conservation

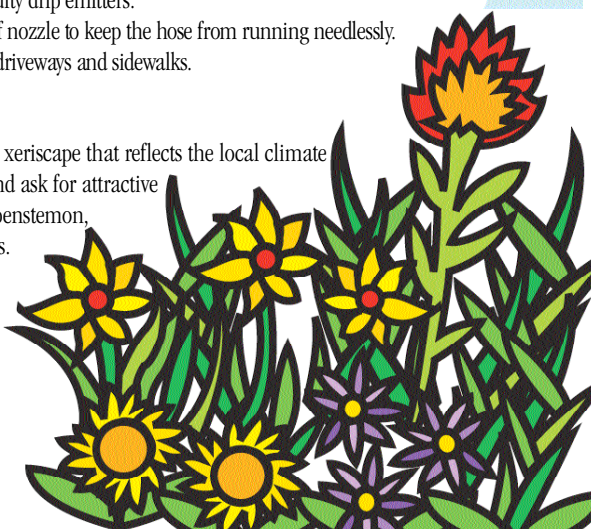
### Agua Action Outdoors

- Don't overwater—and water only when plants need it. During the hot summer months, landscaping can account for more than half of a household's total water use!
- Water during the early morning or late evening. Avoid watering on windy days to reduce water lost to evaporation.
- Avoid watering the sidewalk and driveway. Position sprinklers so that the water lands only on the landscaped area.
  - Place a layer of mulch around trees and plants. Mulching helps reduce evaporation and keeps the soil moist.
  - Convert your lawn to a less-thirsty native grass such as blue grama or buffalograss.
- Use a low-profile, large-drop sprinkler system to increase irrigation efficiency.
- Install a water-efficient drip irrigation system for trees, shrubs and flowers.
- Adjust your automatic irrigation controller every month. Landscapes don't need as much water in September as they do in June.
- Check your irrigation system every spring. Walk through the yard and fix or replace leaky water lines, broken sprinkler heads and faulty drip emitters.
- When washing your car, use a shut-off nozzle to keep the hose from running needlessly.
- Use a broom instead of a hose to clean driveways and sidewalks.



### Think Color!

A water-conserving landscape doesn't have to consist of cacti and gravel. A smart xeriscape that reflects the local climate and growing conditions can be lush and colorful. Visit your local nursery and ask for attractive water-wise plants and ornamental grasses such as yarrow, Austrian copper rose, penstemon, Texas red yucca and wheatgrass.



For more information on water conservation,  
call 1-800-WATER-NM (1-800-928-3766).

New Mexico Office of the State Engineer  
[www.ose.state.nm.us](http://www.ose.state.nm.us)