

Think Blue! What can YOU do?

How many of these suggestions from the City of Portsmouth DPW Water-Stormwater Department can you adopt?

In your lawn and garden

- Water your yard in the morning or evening to avoid losing water to evaporation.
- Step on your grass. If it bounces back, you don't need to water. One heavy rain can eliminate the need to water for up to 2 weeks.
- Group the plants in your garden according to their watering needs so you're not over-watering.
- Avoid over-fertilization as that increases plants' need for water and adds nitrogen to stormwater runoff.
- Create a rain garden!
- Use "old" pet water and "used" ice cubes to water plants outside and in.
- Use mulch around plants to retain water, repel weeds, moderate temperature and avoid erosion.
- Use a WaterSense- labeled sprinkler system that uses actual local weather to tailor watering.
- Compost. Add organic waste from your kitchen to a compost pile that forms a nutrient-rich soil to add to your garden.
- Use a broom instead of the hose to clean walks.
- Use buckets instead of the hose for outside washing and use a hose with shut-off nozzle for final rinse only.
- Wash your car on the grass instead of the driveway – or use a commercial car wash. Save 100 gals.

In your bathroom:

- Check your toilet for leaks. Add 10 drops of food-coloring to the tank. Wait 15 min. If there is any color in the bowl, you have a leak. Save 9.5 gal per day.
- Replace your toilet with a new, water-efficient one. Many places like Portsmouth offer rebates. Save 10 gals per day.
- Install low-flow showerheads, take showers instead of baths and keep them under 5 minutes. Save 50 gals per day.
- Turn off the water while brushing your teeth, shaving and while lathering your hands. Save 7 gals a day.

In the laundry room:

- Run only full loads in the washing machine.
- Invest in a high-efficiency washing machine. Many places like Portsmouth offer rebates. Save 10 gals per day. Save 27 gals per load.

In your kitchen:

- Scrape plates instead of rinsing before loading them in the dishwasher.
- Use the garbage disposal sparingly as running the disposal uses water!
- Run only full loads in the dishwasher. Save 2,000 gals per year.
- When washing dishes by hand, fill the sink with soap and water instead of running the water. Rinse in a basin of clear water.
- Keep a container of drinking water in the refrigerator instead of letting the tap run til cold.
- Clean vegetables and fruit in a bowl or sink full of clean water.
- Thaw frozen foods in advance rather than under running water.
- Watch what you eat. Some foods like meats can be water-intensive and nitrogen-polluting to bring to the table. Save 300-800 gals per meal.