PLUMBING

- Install low-volume flow control devices on shower heads and tub faucets.
- Limit the amount of shower or tub water by the way you use hot and cold water faucets.
- Cut off all water if you are going to be away from home on a vacation or trip. This keeps children from turning on outside faucets while you are away.
- Insulate hot water pipes to reduce the amount of water that must be run to get hot water to the faucet.
- Check tub and lavatory faucets for drips. Make repairs promptly. These problems get worse - never better. Low-volume faucet aerators are easy to install.
- Teach children to turn water faucets off tightly after use.
- See if your toilet is continuing to flow after flushing. Put a small amount of food coloring into the tank. If the color trickles into the bowl, there is a leak and repairs are needed. Install toilet dams or displacement devices.
- Place a quart plastic (not glass) bottle filled with 1 inch of sand or gravel plus water in your toilet flush tank to save 1 quart of water per flush. (Plastic bags can be used instead of a bottle.)
- You can adjust the float level of the toilet to reduce the amount of water necessary to flush the toilet, but this is not recommended. You can break the float arm, and you can reduce the pressure to the point where it will not flush properly.
- In buying a new toilet, look for a "low volume" model. They don't use as much water per flush.
- Put "gray" water (saved from cleaning, bathing, etc.) in the toilet - not the flush tank - when it needs flushing. Otherwise, if the system loses pressure, "gray" water in the tank could back-siphon and get into your drinking water system.
- Avoid using the toilet as a trash basket for facial tissues and similar items. Each flush uses 5 to 6 gallons of water.

LAUNDRY

- Wash only full loads of laundry.
- Buying a new washing machine? An automatic clothes washer uses 40-80 gallons of water per load. Shop carefully and look for these features:
    - Models that use less water.
    - Capacity to fill needs. Don't buy a larger machine than you need.
    - "Float fill" models that provide a more accurate control of the amount of water used than "time" fill.
    - Water level controls so you can adjust the amount of water you use, depending on the load.
    - "Suds saver" models that save wash water for later loads.
- Use the "gray" water that siphons from your washing machine into a laundry tub for cleaning, to flush the toilet, or water plants. See directions for using "gray" water on plants. Use all "gray" water as soon as possible. Do not store longer than 24 hours.
- Save hand washing jobs and do them all together. If possible, use the same sudsy water for several items. Make one rinse do the job of two.
- Check garments to make sure they need washing. Don't wash clothes more often than necessary.
- Avoid buying new clothes that require separate washings.

PERSONAL CARE

- Urge family members to take showers instead of tub baths when possible. If tub baths are taken, the amount of water used should not exceed one-third of tub capacity. Tub baths can take 30 or more gallons of water, depending on how high the water level. Showers use 5-8 gallons of water per minute.

- Cut down on the number of showers or tub baths taken. Replace some of them with sponge baths using a small amount of water in a lavatory.
- Limit shower time to 5 minutes or less.
- Relax with massage, stretching, or exercises instead of showers.
- Turn off shower water while you apply soap to body or lather hair
- If possible, close bathtub drain during shower so that all the water stays in the tub. Use this to flush the toilet or water outdoor plants.
- Turn off water while you shave, brush teeth, etc.
- Encourage children to change into play clothes after school so that school and play clothes can be worn several times.

FOOD PREPARATION

- Save water used to wash produce and to do other kitchen chores by placing a bowl or basin under the faucet. Use water saved for cleaning, watering plants, and similar chores.
- To get warm water, turn hot water on first; then add cold water as needed. You get warm water quicker this way and save water.
- Reduce the use of garbage disposals—which use as much as 4 gallons of water per minute - by peeling vegetables, eggs, and other foods on newspapers. Wrap the food waste and dispose of it with the trash. Or, use food waste in a garden compost pile.
- Use only the amount of water necessary to cook foods such as frozen vegetables and stews. You'll preserve nutritional value as well as save water.
- Cook foods over low heat in pans with tightly fitted lids to reduce evaporation of liquid.
- Plan more one-dish casserole meals in which vegetables are cooked without adding cooking water.
- Use a tea kettle to heat water and avoid loss of water through evaporation.
- Time foods that must boil so that too much evaporation does not take place.
- Select the proper size pans for cooking. Pans that are too large require more cooking water.
- Use a pressure cooker to save time and water.
- If possible, cover or wrap foods in aluminum foil during baking or roasting to cut down on the evaporation of liquid.
- Save leftover vegetable juices for reconstituting soups, cooking raw or frozen vegetables and stews, and making gravy. Use within a day or two.
- Use leftover fruit juices for drinking and making gelatin salads
- Store drinking and meal preparation water for a short period of time if an emergency water shortage seems likely. Use clean plastic or glass jugs with tight-fitting lids. Keep in the refrigerator.
- Chill water in bottles in the refrigerator to avoid running water. Shake bottle before serving to incorporate air in the water so that it doesn't taste flat.
- Put drinking water on the table only if people really drink it.

DISHWASHING

- Cut down on the number of utensils used in preparing food, and on the plates and glassware used with meals. This will save on dishwashing.
- Wash only full loads of dishes in dishwasher. A dishwasher uses about 12-20 gallons of water per load.
- Avoid unnecessary rinsing of dishes that go into the dishwasher. Scrape if necessary.
- If washing dishes by hand, use one pan of soapy water for washing and a second pan of hot water for rinsing. Wash least soiled dishes first.

HOUSEHOLD CLEANING

- Wipe up small spills as they occur to avoid frequent mopping of floors.
- Regularly vacuum carpets and rugs so you won't need to shampoo them too often. Take care of spots as they occur.
- "Collect" household cleaning chores. Do them together to save water.

HOUSE PLANTS

- Use rinse water saved from Bathing or clothes washing to water indoor plants. Do not use soapy water on indoor plants. It could damage them.
- Water indoor plants only when needed. Too much water can damage plants.

OUTSIDE THE HOME

- Car washing can use a lot of water. You may have to lower your standards and wash the car less often.
- Use a bucket of sudsy water to remove soil from the car. Hose down only as a final rinse.
- Drive your car onto your lawn before you rinse it. Water the grass as you wash your car.
- Take advantage of a soft summer rain to wash your car. Get out there with soap and a sponge!
- If water supply permits use of outdoor pool, cover the pool when it's not being used to prevent evaporation.
- Clean the swimming pool filter often. Then you won't have to replace the water as often.
- Soapy water that comes from soap you can use on your skin is OK for outdoor plants. Do not use water with bleach or borax compound in it on plants. It could damage them. Rinse water can be used on outdoor or indoor plants.
- If water is rationed or otherwise restricted, lawns and annuals should receive the lowest priority for outside watering. Trees and shrubs are more expensive to replace and should receive any available water.
- "Mulch" to retain moisture in the soil. Spread leaves, lawn clippings, newspapers or plastic around plants. Mulching also controls weeds that compete with garden plants for water.
- Try "trickle" or "drip" irrigation systems in outdoor gardens. These methods use 80-90 percent less water than hose or sprinkler methods. A tiny plastic tube runs along the ground near plants. The trickle system provides many tiny holes to water closely placed plants. The drip system tubing contains holes or openings at strategic places for tomatoes and other plants that are more widely spaced.
- If you are using a garden hose or sprinkler, water the garden less frequently but water it thoroughly. Don't let water run down driveway or street.
- Use a broom, not the hose, to clean the garage, the sidewalks and the driveway.