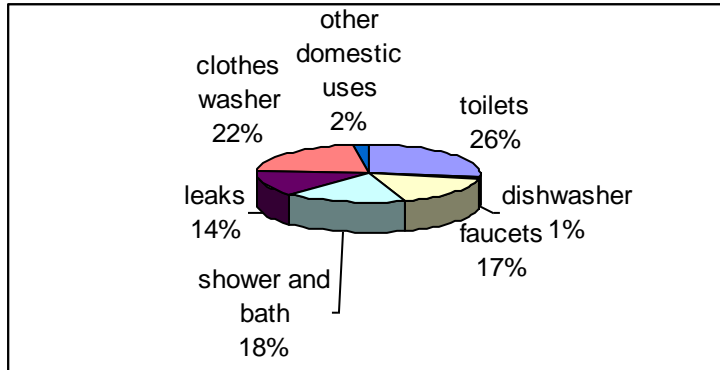


Using Water More Efficiently in the Home

Did you know that the average household in Massachusetts uses roughly 65 gallons of water per person per day?* There are times when this causes stress on our clean water supplies.

Average household water use in Massachusetts



There is an excellent Web site – www.H2ouse.org – for household water efficiency information. Produced by the California Urban Water Conservation Council and the American Water Works Association, it includes a virtual house tour that offers numerous tips for saving water.

Tips for reducing water use in the home:

- Determine whether your water system is leaking. Turn off all water and keep an eye on your water meter. The Web site mentioned above provides detailed instructions on where to look for your meter and how to read meters of different types.
- Replace your old high-volume toilet, the largest water user in your home.
- Replace your washing machine, the second largest water user in your home. Energy Star™ rated washers with Water Factors of 9.5 or below use 35 to 50 percent less water and 50 percent less energy per load. Several utility companies offer rebates to consumers who purchase these washers. For additional information, visit www.energystar.gov, click on appliances, then special offers.
- Install low-flow showerheads on all showers and aerators on all faucets.



Graphic from Ohio State University Extension

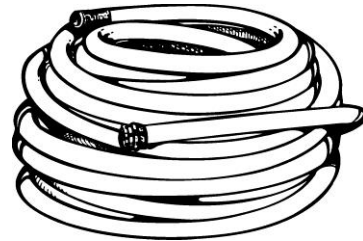
* Massachusetts households use between 50 and 100 gallons per person per day, depending on whether the household is in an apartment or a home with a yard.

Using Water Wisely Outdoors

Vast quantities of water are used for watering lawns and gardens during the warm weather months, and that puts stress on Massachusetts water supplies. Summer is the most important time for us to be conscious of how we use water in our day-to-day activities.

Here are some tips for reducing outdoor water consumption:

- Use rain barrels to collect water when it is plentiful and use them to water plants when needed. Your town or city might offer a discount on rain barrels or sponsor a rain barrel sale day.
- Use automatic shut-off hose nozzles so water is not left running unintentionally. Use timers when watering for an extended period.
- Water your lawn early in the morning, if possible, and only when necessary. Lawns only require one inch of water per week. Use a rain gauge to determine if your lawn is getting enough. Frequent watering actually can weaken your lawn by encouraging shallow roots that are less tolerant of dry periods.



- Keep your mower blades sharp to prevent tearing of grass and raise your lawn mower's blade to 2½ ". Longer grass provides shade for the roots and helps reduce water loss.
 - Decrease the size of your lawn by creating pebbled areas or planting drought-tolerant ground covers, such as liriopie or monkey grass.
 - Select ornamental plants that can withstand periods with low water.
 - Mulch around plants, shrubs, and trees to provide a ground cover that reduces water evaporation from the soil while reducing the number of weeds that compete for soil moisture.
- Collect cold water from the tap in watering cans for use in the garden when waiting for water to get warm.

For more information about ecological gardening, visit the lawn and garden section under <http://www.mass.gov/dep/consumer/>