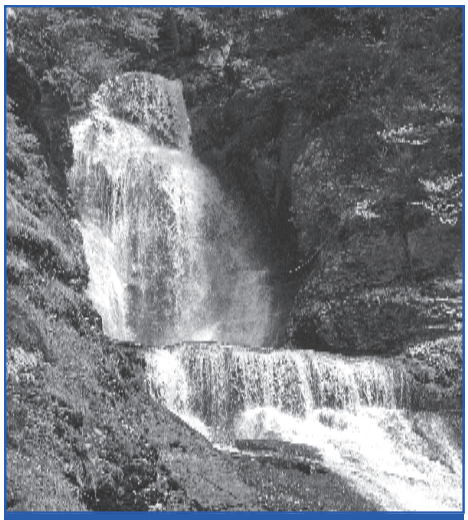

The facts on Water Conservation

Almost 80 percent of Earth is covered with water, but only 3 percent of the planet's water is fresh water or water that is available to be used as drinking water. Daily use of water is on the rise, and many parts of the world are now reaching the limits of their supply. South Carolina has lakes, rivers, streams and underground water sources. However, a lack of rainfall, more people living in our state, and industry growth can increase demand for water. When you use water wisely, you help the environment. You also save money. ***Try some of the ideas below and begin saving water today!***

Definitions:

Conserve
To keep in a safe or sound state; to save; to preserve; to protect.

Water Conservation
Saving water by using less of it; the care, preservation, protection, and wise use of water.

Water Efficiency
Using water more wisely.

Water Supply
The water available for a community or region; the source and delivery system of such water.

Groundwater
Water beneath the earth's surface, often between soil and rock, that supplies wells and springs.

Surface Water
All bodies of water on the surface of the earth: rivers, lakes, and streams.

Bathtub and Shower

Use less water in the bathtub.
Filling the tub uses about 50 gallons of water. Try bathing in about 10 gallons. Plug the tub when you shower to see how much water is just going down the drain.

Don't waste clean water.
While waiting for the shower water to heat up, catch the cold water in a bucket and use that water for pets, plants, cleaning, and other uses.

Shorter showers save money and water.
By keeping showers under five minutes, a family of four can save over 1,000 gallons of water monthly.

Install a low-flow showerhead.

Turn off water while you are soaping up.

Washing Machines

Buy an energy saving machine.
In the market for a new washer? Buy an Energy Star model and save water and electricity.

Use a front-loading machine.
The newest innovation in washers is the front-loading washing machine. These save even more water and electricity.

Run full loads.
Match your washer's load selector to each load size. Wash only full loads.

Use only as much detergent as necessary.

Use cold water.
Using cold water saves the energy required to heat the water.

Toilet

Flush only when necessary.
Every flush you eliminate can save between 2 and 7 gallons of water.

Don't use the toilet for a wastebasket .

Replace older toilets with ultra low flush toilets.
If you don't have a low-flow toilet, use plastic bottles filled with water and pebbles to displace water in the tank. Make sure you don't obstruct the float device by doing this. Don't use bricks!

Test your toilet for leaks.
Leaks continuously waste water. Add a few drops of food coloring to your toilet tank. If it's leaking, you'll see the coloring in the toilet without flushing. Fix toilet leaks and save as much as 600 gallons of water monthly!

Landscaping

Water yards wisely .
Remember that landscaping is most likely your number one user of water. Your lawn and plants benefit most from slow, thorough and infrequent watering.

Minimize evaporation by watering in the early morning or evening .

Install drip irrigation systems with automatic timers.

Mulch to retain water .

Plant hardy, water-saving plants.

Mow less frequently in dry times.

Car Washing

Use a shut-off nozzle, and don't run the water while washing the car.

Direct runoff to water your landscaping.

Choose a car wash that recycles water.

For more information, visit EPA's "Cleaner Water Through Conservation" Web site at http://www.epa.gov/water/you/intro.html

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