

Water Conservation

For Apartment and Condo Building Managers



Tips from your local water utility to help you reduce water use and save money on your bill



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Manage Leaks

- **Check for leaks and running toilets** during walkthroughs and turnovers. Turn on tub showers to **find leaky diverters** that waste water with every shower.
- **Replace toilet flappers** every 5 years for an inexpensive way to prevent large leaks. Toilet flappers wear out or crack and are the most common reason for a running toilet.
- **Help tenants report leaks.** Post signs or include information in newsletters about how tenants should report maintenance issues.
- **Watch your bill.** Knowing your property's typical water use can help you identify when there might be leaks from underground pipes, building systems, or landscaping before you see water damage or pooling.
- **Monitor your cooling tower.** If you have a cooling tower, understanding the system's water use and water quality can help you improve its efficiency. Resources are available on our website.

Install water-efficient fixtures and appliances

- **Replace old toilets.** Older toilets can use 3.5 gallons per flush or more and some early low-flow toilets can require two flushes to clear the bowl. **Rebates are available** to replace toilets installed before 2004 with the most efficient models. Visit our website for details.
- **Look for WaterSense-labeled** clothes washers, dishwashers, faucets, and showerheads. These meet efficiency and performance standards. (See various efficiency standards on the back of this page.)

Have landscaping?

- **Install a WaterSense-labeled controller** on your irrigation system. These smart controllers will modify runtimes according to the weather and can reduce water use by up to 25%. **Rebates are available.**
- Visit our website for tips on planting, watering, and building healthy soils, all practices that will reduce the amount of water you need to keep your landscape beautiful.

For more information about these tips and other water-saving tools and rebates, call (206) 615-1282 or visit savingwater.org



How much water should my property be using?

It depends. Every property is unique. Some important factors are:

- **Number of residents or units.** This is the most significant factor in water use. More people use more water. For apartments and condos, the average use in our area is around 40 gallons per person per day. However, this can vary widely based on the factors below.
- **Landscaping.** Watering can contribute significantly to overall use and occurs almost entirely in the summer months in our region. If it isn't separately metered, you can estimate how much water goes to landscaping by finding the difference between summer and winter use.
- **Age and efficiency of water fixtures and appliances.** Over the years, updated plumbing codes have required fixtures to be more efficient. Therefore, buildings with newer fixtures use less water. Fixtures are often labeled with how much water they use. You can also use a tool called a flow rate bag to measure actual flow. Compare these flow rates to the table below to learn if it may be worthwhile to replace or retrofit some fixtures.
- **In-unit appliances.** Washing dishes in dishwashers uses less water than washing by hand, so in-unit dishwashers may lead to lower water use. However, in-unit clothes washers may encourage washing more frequently or partial loads, so they may increase water use.

If your property's gallons per capita per day (gpcd) is significantly above 40, consider conducting an assessment of your building to check for leaks and learn the efficiency of the current appliances and fixtures.

If the gpcd is over 100, there may be a large leak or many small leaks. Running toilets are often to blame.



Water Use Abbreviations

- gpc:** gallons per cycle
- gpf:** gallons per flush
- gpm:** gallons per minute
- gpd:** gallons per day
- gpcd:** gallons per capita (person) per day
- CCF:** 100 cubic feet
(1 CCF = 748 gallons)
- IWF:** Integrated water factor
(lower is more efficient)

Determine gallons per capita per day (gpcd)

1. Look up the gallons per day (gpd) on a recent water bill*. If needed, convert the water use reported on your water bill (often in CCFs) to gallons. Then, divide the total number of gallons by the number of days in the bill period.
2. Divide the calculated gpd by the total number of residents on the property to get the gpcd. If you don't know the number of residents, you can estimate with the number of units or bedrooms.

**If outdoor watering is included on the same water meter as indoor use, use a bill from the winter time for this calculation.*

Residential Water Fixture Standards

	Federal Code	WaterSense or Energy Star Certified	WA State Code
Toilets	1.6 gpf	1.28 gpf	1.28 gpf
Showerheads	2.5 gpm	2.0 gpm	1.8 gpm
Bathroom faucets	2.2 gpm	1.5 gpm	1.2 gpm
Kitchen faucets	2.2 gpm	N/A	1.8 gpm/2.2 gpm temporary fill
Dishwashers			
Standard	5.0 gpc	3.5 gpc	N/A
Compact	3.5 gpc	3.1 gpc	N/A
Clothes washers	Standard varies. Look for a low Integrated Water Factor (IWF)		