

# Easy Ways to be Water Wise



## **Outdoors:** When it's time to save water, start outdoors!

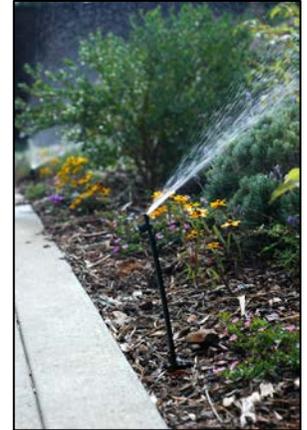
Did you know that most homes with irrigation systems use more water outside than they do for all indoor uses combined? Since sprinklers typically turn on before we wake up, waste often goes unnoticed.

### **Testing your Irrigation System:**

- Test your irrigation system by manually turning it on every month to look for leaks, runoff, and waste. Fix as needed.
- Schedule a free irrigation evaluation with your water provider.

### **Irrigation Scheduling:**

- Turn sprinklers off during the rainy season. Hand water as needed.
- Plants need more water in the spring and summer and less in the fall and winter. Adjust your irrigation schedule based on the seasons or weather. Calculate your monthly irrigation water needs with the Watering Calculator and adjust your schedule based on our Watering % Adjust value updated weekly on the WaterWiseSB.org homepage.



### **Irrigation Upgrades:**

- For trees and shrubs, it's easy and inexpensive to switch from overhead spray irrigation to drip.
- For turf, swap out regular sprinkler nozzles with more efficient rotating nozzles.

### **Landscape Renovations:**

- Consider replacing high water using turf with water wise or native plants.
- For areas around trees and shrubs, be sure to have 3-4" of mulch in place to reduce evaporation and build healthy soil. Mulch is available for free pickup and delivery.

### **Outdoor Habits:**

- Use a broom rather than a hose to clean your driveway or patio.
- Take your car to a water recycling car wash, or wash your car on your lawn using a shut off nozzle and bucket.
- Use a cover on your pool to dramatically reduce evaporation, water and energy costs.



### **Working with Your Gardener:**

- If you work with a landscaper, ask make sure they check for leaks, runoff and overspray at least once per month. If you have a language barrier with your landscaper, download our bilingual brochure for help.
- Send your gardener to the Green Gardener class taught through SBCC Continuing Education every spring and fall.

For more information, visit [www.WaterWiseSB.org](http://www.WaterWiseSB.org).

## **Indoors**

### **Water Meter:**

- If you think you have a leak but can't find it, start by reading your water meter. Your meter is located in a vault in the ground near the street. Open the lid to read your meter inside. The flow indicator spins when water flows through the meter. If the triangle, needle, or silver crescent is moving when no water is being used, you have a leak.

### **Toilets:**

- Adjust the water level in the toilet tank to be at least 1" below the overflow tube.
- Put a few drops of food coloring in the tank. Wait 15 minutes. If color appears in bowl, your flapper needs replacing.
- Buy a new WaterSense labeled toilet which uses 1.28 gallons per flush or less.

### **Shower:**

- Keep showers to 5 minutes or less.
- Rebates are available on great new 1.5 gallons per minute (gpm) showerheads from So Cal Gas.

### **Sinks:**

- Install faucet aerators; look for 1.5 gpm for kitchen and 0.5 gpm for bathroom.
- Don't let the faucet run when brushing your teeth, shaving, doing dishes, etc.
- Look for leaks and drips and repair as needed.



### **Kitchen and Laundry Appliances:**

- Remember to run full loads only in dishwashers and laundry.
- Consider purchasing a WaterSense or Energy Star dishwasher or washing machine.
- Install a laundry to landscape graywater system to water nearby trees and shrubs.



### **Water Softener:**

- Set the hardness to 19 -21 ppm.
- Change the cycle setting to cycle less frequently.
- Consider switching to potassium chloride to reduce salt in recycled water systems.

### **Reverse Osmosis filtration:**

- Change cartridges on schedule to reduce water waste. If you hear the tank pressurizing and recently used water, it's time to change your filter.

### **Hot Water Heaters:**

- Use an on-demand recirculating hot water pump or a tankless water heater.

## **Numbers to know:**

**748-** Gallons in one 'unit' of water on your bill. Units are also known as Hundred Cubic Feet, HCF, or CCF. How many gallons are you using each month?

**325,851-** Gallons in one Acre Foot (AF). An acre foot is a unit of measure for reservoirs and water providers and is an area the size of one acre filled one foot deep.