

# Specific Actions to be Water Wise



There are many actions each of us can take to reduce water use during these extraordinarily dry times. While not all actions apply to everyone, review the list below for some of the most common things you can do to save water. For more information about each subject, click on the specific links or dig deeper into [WaterWiseSB.org](http://WaterWiseSB.org).

## **OUTDOORS**

Did you know that most homes with irrigation systems use more water outside than they do for all indoor uses combined? Since irrigation typically turns on before we wake up, waste often goes unnoticed. When it's time to save water, start outdoors!

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

- If you work with a landscaper, ask them what actions they can take to help save you water. If you have a language barrier with your landscaper, download our bilingual [brochure](#).
- Send your gardener to the [Green Gardener](#) class.

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

- [Test](#) your irrigation system by manually turning it on 3-4 times a year 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. You can calculate your monthly irrigation water needs [here](#) or adjust your schedule based on our % Watering Adjust value on the [WaterWiseSB.org](http://WaterWiseSB.org) homepage.

### **Irrigation Upgrades:**

- For trees and shrubs, it's easy 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 [readily available](#) throughout the county and available for free pickup or affordable 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 water and energy costs, more information on pools and spas [here](#).

## **INDOORS**

Efficient water use indoors is part efficient technology and part WaterWise behavior. Review this list to find the best ways to save indoors.

### **Water Meter:**

- If you think you have a leak but can't find it, start by [looking at your water meter](#).

### **Toilets:**

- Find info on basic toilet troubleshooting [here](#).
- Adjust the water level in toilet tank to be at least 1" below overflow.
- 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/ minute (gpm) showerheads.

### **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 in dishwashers and laundry.
- Consider purchase of a [WaterSense](#) or [Energy Star](#) dishwasher or washing machine.
- Install a '[Laundry to Landscape](#)' gray water system to water nearby trees and shrubs.

### **Water Softener:**

- Learn how to conserve water and salt used in softeners [here](#).
- Set the hardness to 19 -21 ppm.
- 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, learn more [here](#).

## **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.