City of Amarillo

Water Conservation Guide

Reduce Your Use

every drop counts

Water is a precious resource

It is important to preserve our natural resource and we need help from everyone in Amarillo.

Reduce Your Use.

Conserving water is the most effective and environmentally sound way to protect our water supply.

Every Drop Counts.

Do at least one thing a day to save water.
Even if the savings are small, every drop counts.

This guide contains information on how you and your family can conserve water both indoors and outdoors.

Water Facts

Only 1% of the entire water supply in the world is available for human and animal use. Ninety-seven percent is salt water and the remaining two percent are in forms of ice caps or glaciers.

The majority of water used inTexas is supplied by groundwater.

More than half the human body is made up of water. You can go weeks without food, but only days without water.

We only drink around 1% of all treated water, the rest goes on lawns, in washing machines, down the toilet, and through drains. A healhty person can drink about 3 gallons of water per day.

The average person uses 175 gallons of water per day.

know your h20

Amarillo's Water

There are over 67,000 water meters in Amarillo at homes and businesses

The City's water is supplied from two sources: Lake Meredith and a system of wells drawing underground water from the Ogallala Aquifer.

Lake Meredith is dependent on rainfall and snow melt to replace use of lake water. Each year, the City of Amarillo receives an allocation or a certain amount of water that may be used from the lake.

Amarillo is considered a semi-desert area. The average rainfall in the Amarillo area is about 20 inches.

The primary use of water supply during the spring and summer months are for irrigation and landscaping.

Amarillo used an average of 43,228,493 gallons of water per day in 2010.

inspiration to conserve

City of Amarillo

The City reduced its daily water usage by more than five million gallons.

The City of Amarillo Parks Department began a water conservation program in 2002. The program is saving an average of 112 million gallons of water each year.

Watering over a 1,000 acres of irrigated City parkland has been reduced by 30% resulting in the savings with more than 3 million gallons per day.

Computer-controlled irrigation systems have been installed for more efficient watering of the City parks and facilities.

Where possible, the irrigation of the City parks has been shifted from City of Amarillo drinking water to well water sources.

Athletic fields and parks are seeded with warm season grasses that require less water.

Xeriscaping and native plants that require less water are planted in the City parks.

Fire hydrant flushing and testing by the Amarillo Fire Department is suspended during high water demand periods.

City Utilities Division continues an aggressive program of monitoring problematic water lines to avoid leak.

The City continues to work towards securing additonal water rights to ensure water supply for future generations.

Over 15 million gallons per day of City wastewater effluent is being used by our local electric utility company in applications that previously used drinking water. Reuse of effluent water has saved between 200 - 250 billion gallons of water from being drawn from the aquifer.

doing its share to conserve

saving water OUTDOORS

More than half of residential water use occurs outdoors.

voluntary water conservation

Implement your own voluntary water conservation by reducing residential outdoor watering to twice per week.

This conservation measure alone will have the most significant impact on water usage.

tips to conserve water outdoors

Repair dripping faucets and leaking hoses.

Use hose and sprinkler heads that drip water slowly and close to the ground.

Position sprinklers to water the lawn - not the curb, driveway or streets.

Set automatic irrigation system timers correctly.

Use a bucket of soapy water, not just a hose, to wash your car.

Use a broom (not a hose) to remove debris from driveways and sidewalks.

Drain water from pools and hot tubs onto vegetated areas, not in the gutter.

Install a rain sensor.

lawn talk

Plan your landscape. There's more to a yard than just lawn. Use native and water efficient plants and trees to create an enjoyable outdoor space.

Choose proper plants. Find out what types of plants you have and how much water they really need. Use mulch to retain moisture and control weeds.

Do not overwater. Only water your lawn if it needs it. If your lawn springs back when you step on it, it does not need water. Overwatering your lawn results in shallow roots, which means your lawn is less drought tolerant.

Train your yard to need less water. Water deeply and water less. This promotes deeper roots and healthier turf. Fertilize sparingly and only as needed.

Mow high and mow often. Try to keep your grass 1 1/2 to 3 inches long to encourage a stronger root system and reduce evaporation.

water wisely

Watering wisely outdoors promotes healthier lawns and landscapes, and conserves our precious resource.

Two-thirds of Amarillo's water use in the spring and summer months result from residents watering their lawns and gardens. It is sad but true, homeowners waste roughly half the water they use.

One reason is that homeowners water their lawns and gardens inefficiently.

water right

It's time to change the way we water.

Using the tips on the next page when watering your lawn and garden can result in measurable savings in water consumption.

lawn irrigation tips

When to Water

The optimal time to water is from 10 p.m. - 6 a.m. A properly irrigated lawn typically only needs to be watered two days a week.

When NOT to Water

Do not water when it is excessively windy, rainy or during the heat of the day (10 a.m. to 5 p.m.).

How Much to Water

Applying 1 to 1 1/2 inches of water to your lawn is usually adequate to wet the soil to a depth of 4 to 6 inches.

How Often to Water

Identifty the type of grass you have to determine how often to water during summer months (June, July, and August). Subtract any rainfall from the amount of water needed each week.

lawn care tips

Fertilizer

Fertilize lightly in the spring and again in early fall.

A slow release nitrogen fertilizer helps plants use less water and a lawn fertilizer with 3-1-2 ration of N-P-K (N=nitrogen, P=phosphorus, K=potassium) such as 15-5-10 is recommended to help grass withstand stress. Refer to the Turf Grass Characteristics Table for the recommended amount of fertilizer.

Sprinklers

Use a sprinkler that emits large drops of water that remain close to the ground; not a sprinkler that sprays fine mists into the air.

Prevent Run Off

If runoff occurs before the desired amount of water is applied, turn off the water and allow it to soak in for 15 - 30 minutes. Continue the on-off cycle until the correct amount of water has been applied.

Turf Grass Characteristics

Grass Species	Water Requirement	How Often to Water (June, July, August)	*	Shade Tolerance
Buffalograss[1]	low	Every 2-5 weeks	0-2	poor
Bermudagrass[2]	moderate	Every 7-10 days	2-5	poor
Centipede	moderate	Every 7-10 days	1-2	fair
Zoysia[2]	moderate	Every 7-10 days	2-5	good
Carpetgrass	high	Every 5 days	1-2	fair
Bluegrass	very high	Every 4 days	2-5	good
Tall Fescue	very high	Every 4 days	2-5	good

* Fertilizer Requirements
pounds needed per 1000 sq.ft per year

[1] **Can survive on 10 to 20 inches of water per year.**
[2] **Can survive on 20 to 30 inches of water per year.**

Source: Texas Water Development Board

saving water INDOORS

Saving water inside the home is simple and a matter of changing a few habits. Take steps to use less water.

pledge to save water

I pledge to take shorter showers, turn off the water while I brush my teeth, use less water in the bath tub, find and fix leaks and never pour water down the drain if it can be reused for something else. I pledge to remind my family and friends to use water wisely. I pledge to continue my water saving habits because Amarillo does not have enough water to waste.

in the bathroom

Repair dripping faucets and leaking pipes.

Turn off the water while brushing your teeth or shaving.

Take shorter showers.

Install high efficiency showerheads.

Check toilets for leaks.

Consider purchasing low flow toilets if possible or install a toilet displacement device to reduce the amount of water needed to flush.

Do not use the toilet as a wastebasket.

in the kitchen

Minimize use of the kitchen sink disposal.
Start a compost to dispose of food waste.

If washing dishes by hand, do not leave the water running. Soak dirty pots and pans before rinsing.

Only run the dishwasher when it is full.

Thaw meat and frozen foods in the refrigerator, not under running water.

Clean fruits and vegetables in a bowl of water rather than running water from the tap.

Reduce Your Use

You are the key to conserving water and you can make a difference by taking simple steps each day.

Every Drop Counts

www.amarillo.gov.