

Drinking Water In Westfield



WHY WATER CONSERVATION IS IMPORTANT

Prepared by the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
for the Westfield Water Department

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A lot of water is wasted because many people give little thought to where it comes from and where it goes after they use it. Yet less than 1% of the Earth's water is available for human consumption. There is no "new" water on Earth. Municipal drinking water in Westfield comes from a number of different sources. The Granville Reservoir, a surface water source located in the Town of Granville, contributes approximately 60% of the City's drinking water. All of the water from this source is treated and filtered at our treatment facility in the Town of Southwick. The City also has six (6) active groundwater wells located off East Mountain Road, Holyoke Road, Union Street, and Northwest Road. Due to the contamination of two municipal wells on Shaker Road in 1989, the City periodically purchases water from the Springfield Regional Water System to meet consumer demands. This water comes from their Cobble Mountain Reservoir surface water source and is treated at their West Parish Filter Facility in Westfield.

Read on to learn about easy steps you can take at home to conserve Westfield's precious water supply!

Watering Your Landscape

- Choosing grasses and plants suitable to the conditions of your yard is one of the most important ways to conserve water. If you have sandy, dry soil, select more drought tolerant native plants and grasses.
- Mix compost and decomposed manure into planting beds for added organic matter and better moisture retention.
- Use mulches such as straw, bark mulch, and leaf litter around perennials, vegetables, and shrubs to help maintain moisture retention in the soil.

Try the concept of Xeriscaping which means 'landscaping for water conservation'. The idea is to use plants that require less water. Below is a list of native plants that grow well in drier conditions.

Plants For Dry to Moist Sites, Full Sun to Partial Shade, Acidic to Neutral pH

Trees

Shadbush	<i>Amelanchier spp.</i>
Gray Birch	<i>Betula populifolia</i>
Flowering Dogwood	<i>Cornus florida</i>
Pin Oak	<i>Quercus palustris</i>

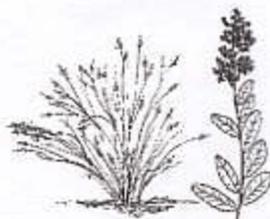
Red Oak
Quercus rubra



Quaking Aspen	<i>Populus tremuloides</i>
Cherry	<i>Prunus spp.</i>

Shrubs

Bearberry	<i>Arcostaphylos uva-ursi</i>
NJ Tea	<i>Ceanothus americana</i>
Sweetfern	<i>Comptonia peregrina</i>
Gray Dogwood	<i>Cornus racemosa</i>
Red Cedar	<i>Juniperus virginiana</i>



Meadowsweet
Spiraea latifolia



Lowbush Blueberry
Vaccinium angustifolium

Highbush Blueberry	<i>Vaccinium corymbosum</i>
Arrowwood	<i>Viburnum dentatum</i>

Perennials

Butterflyweed	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>
Aster	<i>Aster laevis</i>
	<i>Aster azureus</i>
	<i>Aster ptarmicoides</i>
Coreopsis	<i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i>
Hayscented Fern	<i>Dennstaedtia punctilobula</i>
Maximilian Sunflower	<i>Helianthus maximilianii</i>
Lupine	<i>Lupinus perennis</i>
Goldenrod	<i>Solidago rigida</i>
Bird's Foot Violet	<i>Viola pedata</i>

Grasses

Purple Love Grass	<i>Eragrostis spectabilis</i>
Little Bluestem	<i>Sisyrinchium scoparium</i>

Household Water Conservation

Bathroom facilities claim nearly 75% of indoor water usage!

Toilets

- How many times a day is the toilet flushed in your house? Toilets can account for almost 30% of all indoor water use, more than any other fixture or appliance. Older toilets (installed prior to 1994) use 3.5 to 7 gallons of water per flush and as much as 20 gallons per person per day.

- When watering, place sprinklers in areas where you won't be wastefully watering the road or your driveway, and water in the early morning to prevent fungal growth and minimize evaporation from the midday sun.
- Water deeply and infrequently. Deeper watering encourages the roots of grass to grow long and healthy, allowing your lawn to survive drier periods and save money on your water bills. Most lawns need about one inch of water to saturate grass roots 4-6 inches in length. Place an empty coffee can in the watering area and measure the amount of water in the can to determine when you have watered enough.
- Reduce the amount of lawn in your yard and replace it with native wildflowers, grasses, trees, and shrubs. Groupings of native plants suitable to the conditions of your site not only require little watering but provide habitat for wildlife.
- It is natural for your lawn to turn brown in late summer. Many lawn grasses are cool season grasses that thrive under the cooler, moisture conditions of spring and early summer. Cool season grasses naturally go dormant in late summer and there isn't much all the watering in the world can do. If this troubles your aesthetic sensibilities, be sure your lawn mix has both warm and cool season grasses to provide you with the most green throughout the entire growing season without having to needlessly waste water to put off dormancy.
- Run roof gutters into cisterns to collect rainwater and use for watering gardens and other plants around the house.
- Use a trigger nozzle on your hose so that water is not running when you don't need it. A trigger nozzle is best because it turns off automatically.

- Replacing an old toilet with a new model can save a typical household 7,900 to 21,700 gallons of water per year. Consider flushing the toilet one less time a day and installing an ultra-low flush toilet that uses only 1.6 gallons per flush.
- Is it possible that your toilet has a leak. You can test it by putting 10 drops of food coloring in the tank. Don't flush for 15 minutes. If the colored water shows up in the bowl, the tank is leaking. Have the leak repaired to eliminate wasting water.

Showers and Faucets

- Don't let the water run when you brush your teeth, shave, or wash your face and save more than 5 gallons per day.
- Keep a jug of water in the refrigerator so that you don't have to run the faucet to get cold water.
- When filling the tub, don't wait for the water to get hot before plugging the drain. That initial cold water will be warmed by the hot water to follow.
- Take a quick shower rather than a bath and save an average of 20 gallons of water.
- Select the appropriate water level for the size of your load of laundry. Use full loads whenever possible.