



## IN THE BATHROOM

### The shower

#### Switch to a low-flow showerhead.

These use 2.5 gallons per minute or less. Check the flow rate by using a five-gallon bucket. Turn the shower on full blast for two minutes. If it overflows, it is not low-flow. Water container plants with the test water.

#### Keep a timer in the shower.

An efficient shower should last 3 or 4 minutes and use less than 10 gallons of water. Every minute a shower is shortened can save about 75 gallons of water a month. Turn off water while soaping and shampooing to save even more.

### The toilet

Replace an inefficient toilet.

Toilets made before 1993 use from 3.5 to 8 gallons per flush while high-efficiency toilets use 1.6 gallons or less. So a person who flushes 5 times a day would save about 3,500 gallons of water a year. (Check under the tank lid to see what year the toilet was made).

Check for leaks by dropping some food dye in the tank. After 15 minutes, check if there is dye in the bowl.

## IN THE KITCHEN

### The faucet

Install a low-flow aerator.

These cost \$5 to \$10 and mix air into the water stream so the pressure remains the same.

When handwashing dishes, use a minimum amount of detergent to minimize rinse water and don't leave the water running.

### The dishwasher

Only run dishwashers when full.

Newer machines don't require advance rinsing.

## IN THE LAUNDRY ROOM

Buy high-efficiency front-loading washing machines.

They use half the 41 gallons used by older washers.

Pretreat stains to avoid rewashing and use the least amount of detergent to reduce rinsing.

McClatchy Tribune graphic

Sources: The California Urban Water Conservation Council, [www.h2house.org](http://www.h2house.org); "Household Water Conservation" by the Pennsylvania State University's College of Agricultural Sciences; the nonprofit citizen's group the Mono Lake Committee, [www.monolake.org](http://www.monolake.org); and the California Water Service Company, [www.calwater.com](http://www.calwater.com)

## AT THE WATER METER

Compare the meter at the beginning and end of the day to tell how much was used.

Identify leaks by turning off all household taps and seeing if the meter still turns. (A leaky faucet that drips five times a minute may waste 260 gallons of water a year).

Sacramento residents who have had a water meter installed will see on bills how actual water use matches up to the flat rate currently charged.

If a water meter is yet to be installed, learn about personal water use through an online water use calculator like this one from a North Carolina water agency: [www.owasa.org/pages/WaterCalculator.html](http://www.owasa.org/pages/WaterCalculator.html)