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2024

WINTER
EDITION



Filter Pipe Gallery at NEWPP



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Saving Every Drop: Smart Ways to Reduce Your Water Bill and Conserve Water at Home



As homeowners, we often find ourselves puzzled by rising water bills, particularly when we think our usage habits haven't changed. The reality is that conserving water is not just a matter of cutting costs, but also a crucial step towards sustainable living. This article is intended to share simple yet effective ways to conserve water in your home, potentially lowering your bills and helping the environment.

Identifying Hidden Water Wasters

Leaky Faucets: That tiny drip from your faucet could cost you thousands of gallons of water over a year. Regularly inspect your faucets for leaks and fix them promptly. A small investment in repairs now can lead to significant savings.



Running Toilets: Often overlooked, a running toilet can waste an astonishing amount of water. Listen for continuous running water and check for internal leaks. Simple adjustments can often solve these issues.



Irrigation System Leaks: Unseen leaks in your irrigation system are silent culprits. Conduct seasonal checks and ensure your system is running efficiently.



Over-Watering Lawns: Excessive lawn watering -- especially during summer -- can lead to high water usage. Water in the middle of the night or before dawn to minimize evaporation. Adjust your watering schedule according to weather conditions. One controller setting doesn't suit all seasons.



Everyday Water-Saving Tips

Shorter Showers: Cut down your shower time

and consider installing a low-flow showerhead for significant water savings.

Full Loads Only: Operate your dishwasher and washing machine only with full loads. This simple practice can save gallons of water each week.

Turning Off the Tap: A simple yet effective habit – turn off the tap while brushing your teeth. Even grade school children know this important practice and will remind their parents to do the same.

Reusing Water: Get creative with reusing water. For instance, use cooking water for your plants or set up a rain barrel for watering landscaped areas.

Long-Term Water Conservation Strategies

Water-Efficient Appliances: Invest in appliances like high-efficiency toilets and ENERGY STAR rated washers which use less water and reduce your bills in the long run.

Xeriscaping: Consider landscaping with drought-tolerant plants that require minimal watering, reducing your outdoor water use dramatically.

Raising Awareness and Involvement

Educating Family Members: Make water conservation a family affair. Teach children the importance of saving water and turn it into a positive, collaborative effort.

Community Involvement: Get involved in community initiatives focused on water conservation or start one yourself. There's strength in numbers!

Conclusion

Water conservation in the home is easier than you think. By making small adjustments to daily habits and considering some long-term strategies, we can make a significant impact on our water usage and bills. Let's all take steps towards a more sustainable and cost-effective lifestyle by valuing every drop of water. 💧

Surface Water Supply Project

To meet the Harris-Galveston Subsidence District and Fort Bend Subsidence District's groundwater reduction requirements for 2025 and beyond, the West Harris County Regional Water Authority has partnered with the North Fort Bend Water Authority to construct the Surface Water Supply Project. The Surface Water Supply Project is needed to conserve groundwater and reduce land subsidence. Pumping large amounts of groundwater causes the ground to settle, lowering the elevation of the land.

This project will help to reduce land subsidence and will meet the water needs of a rapidly growing population.

Once complete, surface water from Lake Houston will be supplied to retail water providers by way of the City of Houston's Northeast Water Purification Plant through over 55 miles of pipeline and two large pump stations. These transmission pipelines will vary in diameter from 42 inches to 96 inches, depending on the pipeline segment. 💧



A1-A2 - Seal Slab Curing at E Mt Houston Launch Shaft



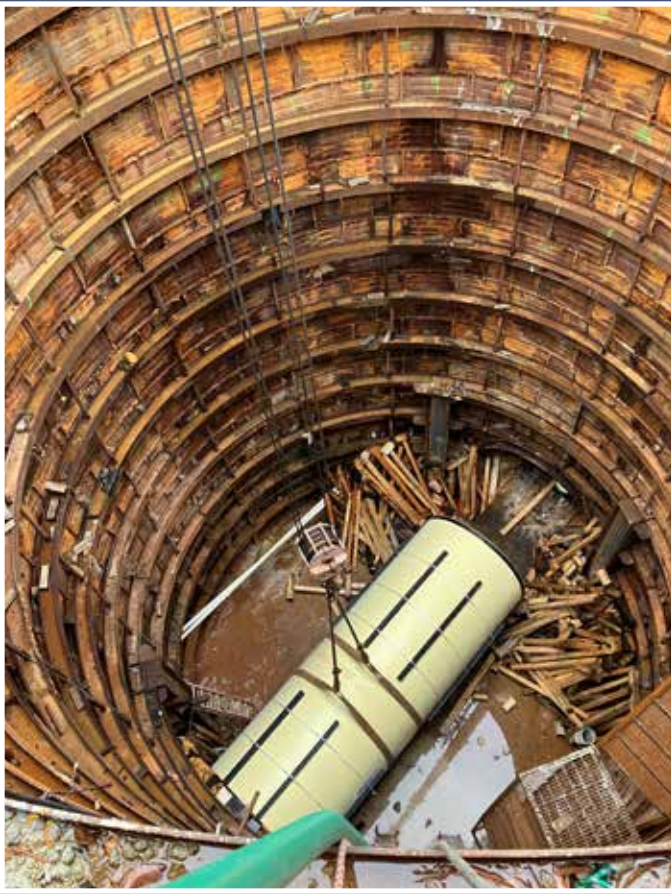
A1-A2 - Seal Slab Curing at SE Pipelines Launch Shaft



B3 - Steel Pipe Deliveries



C1 - Bear Creek Tunnel Eye




B1-B2 Hollister Detention Pond – Threading Tunnel



B1-B2 White Oak Bayou – Tunnel Complete

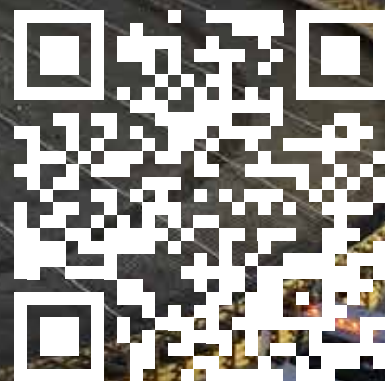


CPS - Chemical Building Slab Concrete Pour

WHCRWA  NFBWA

SURFACE WATER SUPPLY PROJECT

To learn more visit
surfacewatersupplyproject.com
or scan the QR code below.



TO DRIP OR NOT TO DRIP



Navigating Faucet Dripping During Houston Freezes.

When freezing temperatures hit the Houston region, there is often a lot of chatter about whether to leave faucets dripping. While this method is used by some homeowners, it's important to consider the benefits and drawbacks of faucet dripping, including the impact on the broader water system.

Dripping faucets during a freeze can be an effective measure in an individual home to prevent pipe bursts when there is no other solution. However, homeowners in the Houston region should consider the broader implications, including the potential enormous strain on the pressure of municipal water systems. In case of a freeze event, please seek out the advice of your local water provider. Properly winterizing your pipes with insulation, turning off your water at the water meter and draining your pipes, and adding heat tape for pipe outside your home will go a long way in preparing for extreme or prolonged freeze conditions in the Houston area.

Cons of Dripping Faucets During a Freeze

1. **Pressure on the Water System:** When entire neighborhoods adopt this practice, it can put an enormous strain on the municipal water system. This widespread dripping can lead to a drop in water pressure throughout the system, potentially leading to broader issues such as water shortages or even system failures.
2. **Ineffectiveness in Extreme or Prolonged Cold:** In extreme or prolonged cold conditions, dripping faucets will not be sufficient, especially for pipes that are poorly insulated or exposed to direct cold air.
3. **Wastage of Water:** Continuously dripping faucets lead to significant water wastage, an important consideration in areas where water conservation is crucial.
4. **Risk of Overreliance:** Solely relying on this method can lead to neglecting other winterizing steps, such as insulating pipes or sealing leaks, which are more comprehensive.

Pros of Dripping Faucets During a Freeze

1. **May Prevent Pipe Bursts:** The main advantage of dripping faucets is to reduce the risk of water pipes freezing and bursting. As water expands when it freezes, a slow drip keeps water moving, thus minimizing this risk.
2. **Cost-Effective Prevention:** The minor increase in the water bill from a dripping faucet is often seen as a reasonable trade-off compared to the high cost of repairing burst pipes.
3. **Ease of Implementation:** This is a simple, do-it-yourself measure that doesn't require professional skills or significant changes to the plumbing system.💧

The WHCRWA Communications Committee recently hosted a 'Show and Tell' event following the November 8th Board Meeting. The event, titled 'Spotlight on WHCRWA,' featured the inaugural screening of a new video. For those unable to attend the screening, the video is available for viewing at <https://whcrwa.net/spotlight> or by scanning the QR code below.

Show and Tell Workshop

Scan the QR Code to watch the video.



One of the standout features of the event was the interactive exhibits. These exhibits showcased the FREE Authority Community Outreach 'tools.' Participants had the opportunity to learn how to obtain and effectively use these materials to assist their customers make informed decisions about water usage.

The evening was further enhanced by an assortment of refreshments, allowing for casual interactions and networking. This gathering was a step forward in our mission to inform, educate and engage water consumers. It reinforced our position as the "go-to" source for water information and was another step toward promoting a more water-conscious community.

Thanks to all who attended and contributed to the success of this event. We appreciate your participation and enthusiasm! 💧





Northeast Water Purification Plant ribbon-cutting ceremony

On December 11, 2023, a ribbon-cutting ceremony marked the near completion of Phase I of the Northeast Water Purification Plant (NEWPP) Expansion in Houston. This event was attended by Director Eric Hansen, President of the West Harris County Regional Water Authority, along with Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner, officials from Houston Public Works, and representatives from the Texas Water Development Board and other regional water authorities.

The construction of the NEWPP Expansion, which began in 2017, has culminated in a significant enhancement to the water supply infrastructure for the greater Houston area. The expanded facility, once completed, will have the capacity to provide over 400 million gallons of clean drinking water daily. Phase I will add 80 million gallons per day of treated surface water capacity to the plant.

The project was a collaborative initiative involving the West Harris County Regional Water Authority, the City of Houston, the North Harris County Regional Water Authority, the North Fort Bend Water Authority, and the Central Harris County Regional Water Authority. The Northeast Water Purification Plant is located at 12550 Water Works Way in Humble, Texas. ♠



Mayor Turner, Eric Hansen, Carol Haddock



New Administration/Operations Building



Backwash Water Tank



Filter Basins



Settling Basins with Plate Settlers

Photos by City of Houston Public Works

Maximizing Water Efficiency: Harnessing the Power of Compost in Utility Management



Beyond fixing leaks and teaching kids how to brush their teeth with less than five gallons of water, how can consumers reduce their “water footprint?” As the bulk of residential water flows to outside applications, the yard is a great place to start, and compost is one of the most powerful tools.

Unfortunately, compost seems to be wrapped in mystique. A common misconception is that compost is smelly stuff found in animal barns or in garbage bins. Skewering another myth, compost is not difficult to make – it does not require precise recipes, special starters, or a biochemistry background to make great compost. Compost is man’s term for describing the natural process of reclaiming organic material for plant use. Making compost is clean, healthy, thrifty, and probably patriotic, too.

However, many consumers have not seen good compost in action. Because compost, whether made at home or purchased, is such an effective weapon in a water saver’s arsenal, a demonstration project designed for public visits can help the utility meet water awareness goals.

Like any other part of an awareness campaign, some data is needed on the public’s acceptance and knowledge of composting in the service area. Your investigation should explore local perceptions of composting and what kinds of deed restrictions subdivisions may have placed on composting.

To overcome barriers to home composting, several questions need to be answered. What is compost and how does it help water quality? How much space do I need? What kind of equipment do I need? How do I make good

compost? The water utility can answer these questions and encourage composting with an on-site demonstration project that demystifies the compost process and showcases its benefits. Consumers will find that compost is not yucky and that a composter can be as small as a storage box.

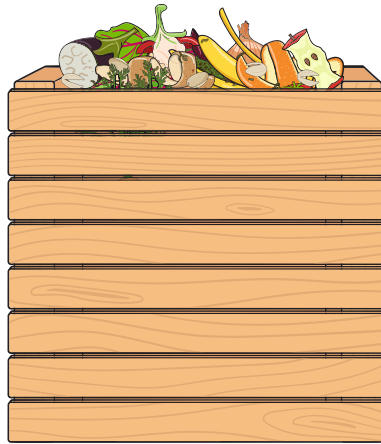
A working compost facility maintained in the utility’s project demonstration area can be used to explain the decomposition process. It can also provide property owners with ideas on how to build and maintain attractive, functional, and odorless compost containers. Informational signage will increase visitor understanding and participation, and it can be reinforced with educational take-home materials. Topics for educational signs or handouts could include building plans, guidelines for building a pile, explanations of types of composting, and local sources of materials.

From the following sections, you will find that space is not a restriction in developing an on-site compost demonstration. However, there are other reasons for locating compost off-site. For instance, children are fascinated by compost, and this is an area that is ripe for developing school partnerships. Also, parks and commercial landscapes often have abundant organic material, and they have steady streams of visitors who would be exposed to partnership projects in those locations. See the discussion “Partners in Composting” later in this section for ideas on developing off-site compost demonstrations. ♦

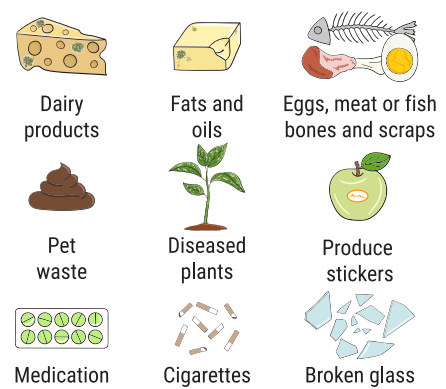
**Visit whcrwa.net/compost
to learn more.**

COMPOST

What To Compost



What Not To Compost



"Hot" Compost Recipe...

There are two basic ways to compost...hot or cold. The hot method is significantly faster because it speeds decay which promotes the growth of the microorganisms. They create the heat -- and actually make the pile steam when it reaches between 120 and 150 degrees F -- as they process the brown and green materials. One of the "cool" things about a hot compost pile is that the heat kills many of the weed seeds and plant disease organisms.

Another bonus with hot composting is that it produces "batches" -- enough to fill a 3' x 3' container -- that are ready to use in one to four months.

- Select and prepare your site. Pick at least a 4' x 8' area where rainwater doesn't "puddle", that's at least partially in the shade, and is near a water source. Use some untreated wood to construct a frame and attach chicken wire securely across the top. Use this pallet for the "floor" to allow good drainage and let oxygen get to the bottom of the pile.
- Add your composting materials. Alternate a 12 inch layer of "green" with 12 inches of "brown". Add some kitchen scraps to layers that will be covered...vegetable and fruit scraps, cores and peelings, egg shells, coffee grinds, corncobs, etc.

- Moisten each brown layer with a fine mist of water, and then apply an inch or two of soil to add the microorganisms. Make sure that there are plenty of coarse materials (e.g., sticks and branches) to aerate the pile. They won't break down easily, so you'll want to sift them out as the compost "matures."
- If the pile is uncovered, you may want to create a depression in the top to collect rainwater. If the weather is excessively rainy, however, cover the pile with a tarp or plastic so it doesn't become saturated and spoil the "recipe". Check the temperature soon after creating the pile -- it should be hot in the middle -- that's a sign that the "bugs" are hard at work.
- Turn the pile over every one to two weeks with a pitchfork or shovel until it doesn't reheat much after turning. Be sure to move the dry materials on the edge into the pile each time.

You'll want some good tools to work with, including a hose with a good spray nozzle, a sturdy pitchfork, a good pointed shovel, a compost thermometer, some gloves, and a tarp or plastic to use as a cover or for mixing materials. ♦

Visit whcrwa.net/compost to learn more.



FATS OILS GREASE

MEET THE PLUMBER'S VERY BEST FRIEND

During winter months, the kitchen is often the favorite place for families to gather... drawn by tempting aromas and lots of tasty tidbits to sample. When the scrumptious meals are over, however, bulky “feast” leftovers get scraped into the disposal and are washed into the drain where they can accumulate in the pipes and ultimately cause some serious chaos.

Some foods and cooking condiments are potentially more troublesome than others. Discarded substances like cooking oil, bacon grease, mayonnaise, egg shells, and pasta can coagulate and stagnate in underground plumbing lines and get even nastier when joined by gravy and mashed potatoes. Long after the meal is forgotten, the sewer system gets sufficiently blocked to cause a backup inside the house (UGH). Then it's the plumber who benefits from costly remedies and repairs.

It is up to the homeowner to make sure that their pipes don't become clogged up with F.O.G. – fats, oil and grease. According to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), most sewer backups occur between the house and the main sewer lines, where it is the resident's responsibility to correct a problem if this should occur. Globbs of grease in the main lines can cause

an unpleasant chain of events and mayhem -- like sanitary sewer overflows that can pollute nearby lakes and streams, creating potential health threats for people and wildlife.

Remember, any substance poured onto the ground or into a storm sewer can end up in groundwater. Take the time to dispose of F.O.G. substances properly -- pour cooking oils, lard, and grease into closeable containers for disposal. Or consider mixing them with kitty litter in a zippedtop bag until the oil is absorbed and ready for disposal.

Here are some more disposal ideas:

- Do NOT pour cooking oil, grease, or melted butter down the drain -- EVER.
- Be careful what you scrape into the disposal. Once the walls of the pipe begin to clog up, all kinds of food remnants can join the “group” and create a stubborn blockage. Let common sense rule!
- Don't run hot water over dishes, pans, fryers or griddles to wash oil and grease down the drain. They'll get “solid” again when they cool off.
- Consider starting a compost pile for appropriate scraps and leftovers. ♦

READY FOR A COLD WINTER?

This may be Houston, but we're perhaps overdue for a chilly winter season. Since this doesn't happen every year, it is easy to forget that more than our plants and pets need some special care when the thermometer dips into the freezing zone.

During prolonged cold snaps, with more than 36 hours of temperatures below 32 degrees, water pipes that pass through outside walls without adequate insulation may begin to freeze. This causes one of the nastiest of household calamities - broken pipes through which water escapes to cause amazing damage. Drips can spring up where you didn't even know there were pipes -- like over the hot water heater or along the bathroom wall.

Here are some common sense things you can do to minimize the risk of pipe damage...

1. Insulate your house. Reduce air leaks to keep heat in and cold out. Caulk or weatherstrip doors and windows. Pay special attention to outside walls where pipes are likely to be located -- near kitchens, bathrooms and laundry rooms -- and add insulation if possible.
2. When temperatures drop below freezing, leave cupboard doors under kitchen and bathroom sinks open to keep the pipes warm.
3. Plan to be away during the winter months? Ask a neighbor or family member to make a special house check if the temperatures take a nose dive. If you have taken care of winterizing basics, these spot checks will make sure nothing has gone wrong to cause a water leak to occur.
4. Keep pipes from freezing. Wrap the pipes in

insulation made especially for water pipes, or in layers of old newspaper, overlapping the ends and tying them around the pipes. Cover the newspapers with plastic to keep out moisture. Do this for any pipes you can access that are near outside walls, mostly under sinks. Wrap the outside faucets and all exposed pipes, as well.

5. Check the manufacturer's instructions for winterizing advice for above ground hot tubs or spas. Fortunately, cold spells don't usually stay around long enough to threaten inground pools, although it is a good idea to check your owner's manual for winterizing tips... just in case.
6. If you have an irrigation system, turn off the water to the sprinklers at the main valve. Set the automatic irrigation controller to the "rain" setting, and turn on each of the valves to release pressure in the pipes. It is usually not necessary to drain all of the water out of any irrigation components because in temperate climates like Houston, the ground doesn't usually freeze at that depth. The above ground equipment does need to be protected, however. Self sticking foam insulating tape or tubes work well. Sprinkler system suppliers may offer additional advice or supplies to help your weatherizing process. Do make sure that the main shutoff valve for the system is "freeze proof."

When the pipes thaw, listen carefully for the sound of water running when the faucet is turned off. This could indicate a broken water line, depending on where the break is located, it may your responsibility to repair -- and the sooner the better! 💧



We've all heard the expression "*It's raining cats and dogs.*" There are several theories about this colorful rainfall observation. It is possible that the word cat is derived from the Greek word 'catadupe' meaning 'waterfall.' Or it could be raining 'cata doxas,' which is Latin for 'contrary to experience,' or an unusual fall of rain.

In Northern mythology the cat is supposed to have great influence on the weather, and English sailors still say "the cat has a gale of wind in her tail" when she is unusually frisky. 'Witches' that rode upon the storms were said to assume the form of cats; and the stormy northwest wind is called the cat's nose in the Harz mountains even in the present day.

The dog is a signal of wind, like the wolf. Both animals were attendants of Odin, the Viking's storm-god. In old German pictures the wind is figured as the "head of a dog or wolf," from which blasts issue. The cat therefore symbolizes the down-pouring of rain, and the dog the strong gusts of wind that accompany a rainstorm; and a rain of "cats and dogs" is a heavy rain with wind.

Raining frogs and fish...

There are numerous accounts of rains of frogs, hay, fish, and grain. All of these accounts seem to be due to tornado-like "whirlwinds." A good whirlwind can lift thousands of pounds and carry objects airborne for miles. There is one reliable account of a fishing boat that sailed into a large waterspout. Fish flew everywhere.

There are about seventy recorded rains of fish, but nearly all of the rains of fish

are small ones. There is, however, one account of a fish fall in India in which more than ten people picked up fish weighing up to eight pounds each. There are many accounts of rains of ice-coated ducks, grasshoppers, fish, and frogs, but there is no account of a raining of cats and dogs.

The most vivid explanation of this picturesque expression suggests that in bygone centuries, the drainage in the streets was so bad that during storms, stray cats and dogs were drowned in the flood that ensued.

Texas Rainmaking

It is not surprising that European American settlers in the Great Plains, dependent on agriculture and plagued by drought, would develop an interest in rainmaking. The earliest attempts involved the concussion method, which was predicated on the theory that gunpowder explosions triggered friction and generated nuclei to produce rain.

In 1890 Congress appropriated funds to put this theory into practice. The task was given to Gen. Robert St. George Dyrenforth. Experimentation began on a ranch in Andrews County, Texas in 1891 and continued in San Antonio in 1892. No rainfall occurred. General Dyrenforth was dubbed "General Dryhenceforth," and the remaining funds appropriated for rainmaking experiments reverted to the Department of the Treasury. ♦



WEST HARRIS COUNTY
METROPOLITAN WATER AUTHORITY

**It's time to prepare for
Winter's Chill:
Safeguarding the Four P's**

PETS, PLANTS,



PEOPLE, & PIPES!



WHCRWA.COM 



STOP WASTING WATER

**Grass sleeps during the
fall and winter months and
doesn't need any water.**



Water is a terrible thing to waste,
so don't do it! Turn off your
irrigation system until spring.

WEST HARRIS COUNTY
METROPOLITAN WATER AUTHORITY

**WATER LESS
SAVE MORE**

WHCRWA.COM 





What homeowners should know about Stormwater Pollution and how to prevent it.

When stormwater falls on hard surfaces like roads, roofs, driveways and parking lots, it cannot seep into the ground, so it runs off to lower areas. To give you an idea of the impact a hard surface makes, consider the difference between one inch of rain falling onto a meadow and the same amount falling onto a parking lot. The parking lot sheds 16 times the amount of water that a meadow does!

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) warns that Stormwater Runoff Pollution may well be the biggest single threat to the quality of our drinking water.

What is Stormwater Pollution?

Rainwater either seeps into the ground or “runs off” to lower areas, flowing into streams, lakes and other bodies of water. On its way, runoff water can pick up and carry many substances that pollute water. Some of these substances, pesticides, fertilizers, oil and soap suds can be harmful even in small quantities. Other materials such as sediment from construction or bare soil, runoff from agricultural land, pet waste, grass clippings and other yard debris — can harm creeks, rivers and lakes when they are present in sufficient quantities.

Various human activities like lawn watering, car washing, and malfunctioning septic tanks can also end up in the storm sewer.

Why should I care about Stormwater Pollution?



Once the rainwater runoff carries pollutants to the nearest body of water, it rushes on untreated to creeks, rivers, water reservoirs, and lakes where it can harm fish and wildlife, kill native vegetation, negatively impact recreational waterways, and contaminate sources of drinking water.

What can homeowners and Landscapers do to help avoid or prevent this pollution?

Start with the obvious: NEVER use storm drains as waste receptacles.



- NEVER pour, blow or sweep lawn care products (pesticides, fertilizers), lawn debris (leaves, plant and grass clippings), pet waste into the storm drain openings.
- NEVER wash fertilizer spills into the street or onto other hard surfaces where they will ultimately be washed off into the storm drain.
- NEVER apply lawn care products while it is raining or about to do so. And, for the same reason, do not overwater after applying lawn chemicals. Always follow manufacturer's instructions.
- Use a broom to sweep debris off hard surfaces such as driveways and streets and around storm drains. Using a hose not only wastes water, but it will wash more pollutants into the drain.
- NEVER blow or sweep grass clippings into the street; when it rains, anything left in the street washes into the drains. Blow grass clippings back onto the lawn where they become a natural fertilizer or add them to the compost pile.



What are “sustainable infrastructure techniques” and how can they help?

These techniques involve substituting alternatives to areas traditionally covered by nonporous surfaces. Grasses and natural ground cover, for example, can be attractive and practical substitutes for paved driveways, walkways, and patios. Some homes effectively incorporate a system of natural grasses, trees, and mulch to cut down on the paved surface area.



Consider constructing wooden decks, gravel or brick paths, and rock gardens to keep the natural ground cover intact and allow rainwater to slowly seep into the ground. This acts as a natural filtering process and reduces harmful water quality impact from rainfall that carries chemicals and pollutants with it into storm sewers and retention ponds, and eventually into nearby streams and lakes.

Creating a rain garden in a shallow depression in the yard – planted with native flowers and grasses – can also make good use of rainwater runoff. ♦



FOUR FILTHY FACTOIDS

1

In just one day, Americans toss out approximately 192,329 tons of packaging material. This amount would fill roughly 12,822 tractor trailers, assuming each trailer can carry about 15 tons. If all these trucks were lined up end to end, they would stretch for around 192 miles, considering the average length of a tractor trailer is about 70 feet. (Sourced from environmental reports or government waste management agencies).

2

Each American generates an average of about 4.9 pounds of garbage a day. If you piled up everyone's daily trash together in a single giant heap, it would weigh more than 662,005 tons. To transport this amount of trash, you would need approximately 17,520 garbage trucks, each with a capacity of 25 tons. If these trucks were lined up end to end, they would stretch for about 66.36 miles — roughly the distance from Houston to Huntsville, Texas. (Sourced from waste management reports or environmental agencies).

3

Annually, an astonishing 20 billion disposable diapers are thrown away. If one were to peel the sticky tabs on each diaper and fasten them all together, the resulting 'diaper chain' would stretch around the Earth approximately 249.53 times. (Sourced from reports or articles related to diaper waste and environmental impact).

4

Climbing to the summit of Pikes Peak, Colorado's famous mountain standing at 14,115 feet, is a breathtaking adventure. But imagine if instead of a mountain, there was a towering pile of electronic waste. Every day, Americans generate enough e-waste to stack up to a staggering 8,839 feet. That's more than half the height of Pikes Peak! (Sourced from environmental reports or studies on electronic waste generation).

Rethinking Waste: The Impact and Importance of Recycling

Recycling, in its broadest sense, is a comprehensive term that includes reduction and reuse in addition to recycling. On average, every American discards approximately 4.9 pounds of waste each day, and by the end of the year, a staggering 662,005 tons of trash find their way into landfills. This amount surpasses the waste generation of most other large countries, with waste disposal rates significantly greater than theirs

Reducing one's intake or consumption of hazardous, non recyclable, and unnecessary goods is the most effective method of waste prevention. Purchasing and using products that are environmentally friendly and sustainable will help you to reduce waste, minimize environmental impact, and save you money. For instance the energy saved from recycling one aluminum can, is enough to run your TV for three hours.

When we recycle aluminum, we extract less bauxite ore from the Earth. This means less harm to the environment, including land and water, and slower depletion of this limited mineral resource. Recycling aluminum is incredibly energy-efficient, using 95% less energy compared to making new aluminum from scratch.

The fact is that we are slowing running out of space to put our ever growing trash mounds and no one wants a landfill anywhere close to them. What's worse is that over 90 percent of what makes it into landfills is recyclable or reusable.

- About 40 percent of landfill waste is paper
- 20 percent is yard waste

- 9 percent is food waste
- Another 9 percent is metals
- 8 percent is glass, and
- 7 percent is plastics.

Our society has become one that is wasteful. Populations need to closely examine the products we purchase and how we can grow in waste prevention. Virtually every material can be recycled in some form or fashion. In fact, there are many industries recognizing this concept and who are generating high profits. Start helping society and become a steward of your community by recycling!

When possible, try to:

- Buy cloth napkins and towels instead of disposable paper ones.
- Buy products in bulk, in concentrate or in reusable containers.
- Use rechargeable batteries.
- Use reusable bags when grocery shopping.
- Regularly maintain your large appliances to extend their lives.
- Purchase compact fluorescent light bulbs that last years longer and require two thirds less energy than regular incandescent bulbs.
- Buy natural pesticides and non toxic products
- Buy products that can be recycled.
- Buy products that contain recycled content



IS THERE A GHOST IN YOUR HOUSE?



THIS COMMON HOUSEHOLD PROBLEM CAN STEAL YOUR WATER AND MONEY, TOO!

Halloween is long past, but at all times of the day and night, a strange noise invades the silence at your house...it wakes you from sleep or sends you chasing around in search of the annoying source. The noise is not predictable...it doesn't have a regular schedule but comes and goes. It sounds like someone turning on a hose outside...like water briefly rushing through a pipe...and then it's gone again.

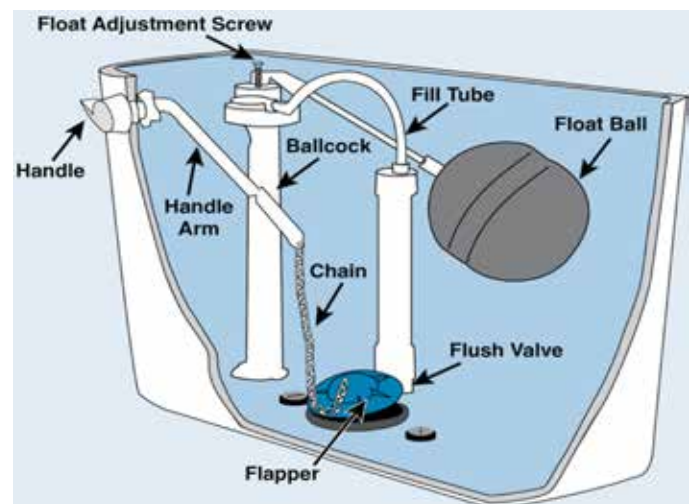
Finally, you just happen to be in the bathroom when, there it is. There's no one there, but the toilet is flushing itself. No, it isn't that famous cat that drove its owners nuts by repeatedly flushing the toilet causing an outrageously high water bill. Yours is a phantom flush...you're the only one there to hear the flush echo around the empty bathroom.

Now that you've solved the mystery, what can you do to make it stop?

The best place to start is to understand the way a toilet works. When you push the lever for a flush, the water in the tank rushes into the bowl.

As the water in the tank drains, the water level recedes and finally gets low enough for the float to activate the fill valve, which triggers the tank to refill again.

While this process is going on, as the levers cause the water to come and go, the sounds are familiar and reassuring; the toilet is performing as expected. A toilet that cuts on and off by itself, or runs intermittently, on the other hand, has a problem that plumbers call a "phantom flush".



A toilet that seems to flush all by itself usually has a slow leak from the tank to the bowl. The water level drops below a certain point, so the float signals that the tank needs to be refilled...which causes the flushing sound as it adds more water. This is usually caused by a deteriorating flapper or flapper seat.

This annoying -- and costly -- problem can



usually be fixed without calling a plumber. Here's a place to start the "diagnosis".

Lift the lid on the tank and put a few drops of food coloring in the tank, and don't flush the toilet for about 30 minutes. If this color starts

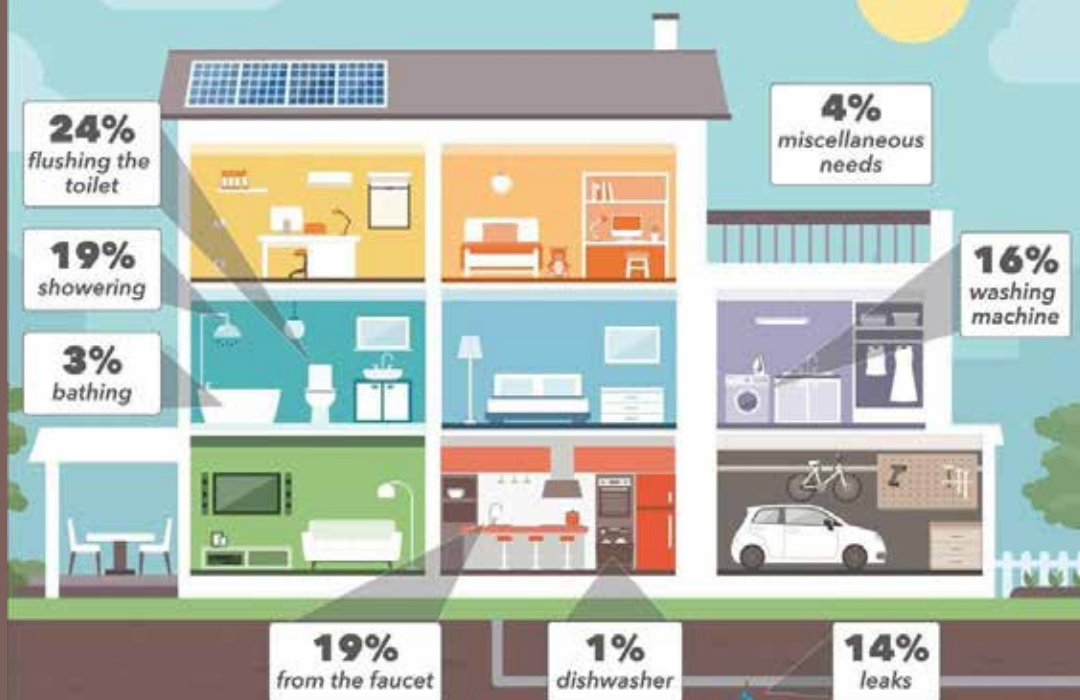
seeping into the toilet bowl, you'll know the flapper is leaking.

One thing you can try is to lengthen the chain holding the flapper to the flush handle by one or two links. When the chain is too short, it prevents the flapper from "seating" in the syphon hole and can cause the type of slow leak that produces the phantom flushing. Repeat the dye test, and if the water changes color again, replace the flapper.

Turn off the water supply and hold down the flush handle to empty the tank. Remove the old flapper by disconnecting it from the chain and unhook its two "ears" from the overflow tube. Take it with you to the hardware store to make sure that you purchase an identical replacement. Follow the instructions to install the new flapper -- making sure the chain has enough slack for the flapper to fully seat. If you're satisfied that everything is working properly, repeat the dye test. Test flush the toilet a few more times before you put it back in service.

Always find and fix toilet leaks...they waste water and money! 💧

How is water used in your home?



Source: Alliance for Water Efficiency

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