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10 TIPS FOR Conserving Water



Water conservation is an essential component of Long Island's environmental protection. The Island gathers the bulk of its drinking water from a single source, and is also home to a number of estuaries rich with biodiverse life. These resources must be protected and preserved. By taking a series of simple steps, each of us can help Long Island conserve its precious water resources.



1. Limit your showers to eight minutes or less.

The average shower time in the US is about eight minutes. Imposing this limit on your shower will still feel normal, but it will save 2.1 gallons of freshwater for every minute you shave off. ¹



2. Use a dishwashing bucket and skip the pre-dishwasher rinse.

Washing a standard load of dishes by hand is much more water-intensive than using most modern dishwashers, often by up to nine times! If you own a dishwasher, scrape off the food scraps and throw the dishes right in. If you don't own a dishwasher, opt for an in-sink bucket with warm water and soap to do the bulk of your washing. ²



3. Visit a professional car wash service.

Professional car washers are professionals for a reason. They optimize the water usage for cleaning your car, saving a lot more freshwater than a DIY hose-wash.



4. Regularly check your appliances for leaks.

Appliances like toilets, faucets, showerheads, hoses, and sprinklers can often develop leaks. A telltale sign for most of these appliances is a persistent drip. For toilets, the leak may be internal. Try dropping some food coloring in the tank and seeing if it spreads to the bowl without flushing. If it does, you may need to replace the rubber flapper or dispensing mechanism. ²



5. Cover your pool when not using it.

In addition to limiting any leaves and bugs from sullyng your pool water, pools can lose a lot of water due to evaporation during the warmer months. In Los Angeles, backyard pools were found to lose up to 20,000 gallons of water per year through evaporation. (NRDC)



6. Water your lawn smartly.

Letting the grass be “thirsty” encourages deeper rooting. 1” to 1½” of water per week will adequately maintain the grass. Water early in the morning to reduce evaporation and decrease water usage up to 40%. Don’t forget that mother nature is the best sprinkler, so keep an eye out for rain and adjust accordingly.



7. Upgrade the head of your water hose.

Many modern attachments for garden hoses come with a variety of options—from jet streams to mists. You may find that using the less water-intensive options suit your needs and reduce water waste.



8. Optimize your laundry loads.

Small loads of laundry are not only wasteful, but they also may not provide enough friction to adequately clean your clothing. Filling your laundry bins with as much clothing as your machine’s instructions specify will ensure that you’re not overdoing it. Many washing machines also have an eco-setting that can assist you in reducing your water usage.



9. Collect that rain water.

Rain water can be a useful source of freshwater for watering your plants. You can use something as simple as a bucket for collecting.



10. Defrost food in the refrigerator overnight.

As opposed to putting food under running water, throw what you’ll want tomorrow in the refrigerator tonight. This trick will avoid wasting water and should work with nearly any food.

Sources

1. Environmental Protection Agency, “Shower Better: A Learning Resource,” https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2017-02/documents/ws-ourwater-shower-better-learning-resource_o.pdf.
2. Natural Resources Defense Council, “9 Tricks to Save Tons of Water,” <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/9-tricks-save-tons-water#:~:text=It%20may%20feel%20more%20virtuous,dish%20before%20you%20load%20it.>

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