



## THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION

OFFICE OF WATER RESOURCES

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# Tips for Saving Water – Indoors and Outdoors

## OUTDOOR WATER USE

### 1) Abide by local water use restrictions

### 2) Minimize landscape water needs through water-smart landscaping principles:

- Maintain healthy soils (a minimum of 6-inches in depth, where possible).
- Choose native plants or plants and turf that need less water.
- Group plants according to their water needs to maximize efficiency of irrigation.
- Minimize areas of turf grass.
- Use mulch to reduce evaporation and moderate soil temperature.
- Maintain turf grass at 2½ -3 inches to shade soil and deepen roots.
- Leave grass clippings on lawn to shade and return nutrients to soil.

Adapted from [Water-Smart Landscapes Start with WaterSense](#) (EPA WaterSense) and [Water-Wise Landscaping & Watering Guide](#) ([www.wateruseitwisely.com](http://www.wateruseitwisely.com)).

### 3) Irrigate efficiently, and only if necessary

- Know plants' water needs and avoid overwatering.
- Don't water 9AM – 5PM.
- Water deeply and less often to encourage deep root growth.
- Regularly inspect and maintain irrigation systems.
- Use "smart" irrigation controllers that adjust for weather.
- Use rain barrels to capture and reuse rainwater.

### 4) Cover swimming pools when not in use to prevent evaporative losses.

### 5) Sweep driveways, walks, patios, and other outdoor areas with a broom rather than hosing them off.

### 6) Wash vehicles using a bucket and sponge, employing a hose with a shut-off nozzle for rinse only, or, if available, use a commercial car wash that recycles water (most do).

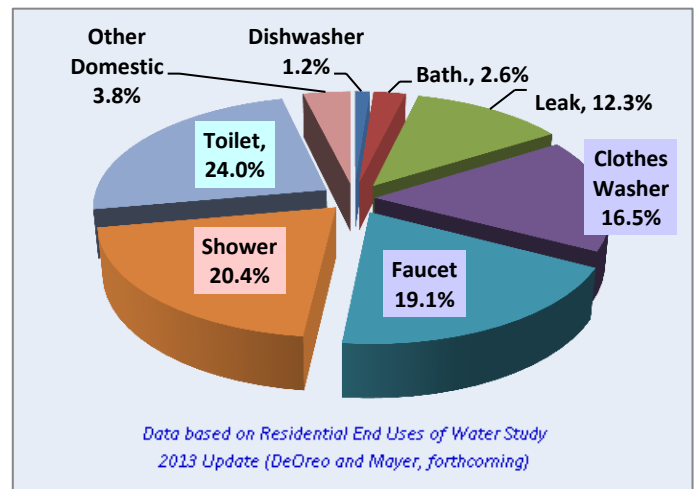
Most years, Massachusetts receives enough rain to supply all the water needed for a healthy, drought-resistant mature lawn or landscape, without the need for irrigation.

Most lawns can survive extended dry periods without watering – they will turn brown, but revive once the rain returns.

To keep an established lawn green, a maximum of one inch of water per week is enough. If there has been an inch of rain in the week, you don't need to water. (Inexpensive rain gauges can be used to measure rain.)

## INDOOR WATER USE

- 1) Choose high-efficiency plumbing products and appliances (look for the WaterSense label on plumbing products and the Energy Star label on appliances to find products that meet high standards for efficiency and performance).
- 2) Fix leaks! Dripping faucets and leaking toilets, pipes, and appliances can add up to hundreds of gallons of water lost per week. (For guidance on finding and fixing common leaks, see [“How to Find and Fix Leaks”](#)).
- 3) Collect and reuse clean household water (water running while you wait for hot water to reach your faucet or shower; leftover water from steaming vegetables or boiling eggs, etc.) and use this to water plants.
- 4) Create a kitchen compost bin as an alternative to using the garbage disposal.
- 5) Turn off water while brushing teeth or shaving.
- 6) Use water-saving showerheads and take shorter showers.
- 7) Wash only full loads of laundry.



Daily household indoor water use (%),  
(sample: approx. 900 homes, nationwide)

## WATER CONSERVATION ON THE WEB

Massachusetts Water Conservation Standards: <http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/eea/wrc/water-conservation-standards-rev-june-2012.pdf>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, WaterSense Program: <https://www3.epa.gov/watersense/>

Alliance for Water Efficiency: <http://www.allianceforwaterefficiency.org/>