



## Water Saving Tips

Helping Pincher Creek be a water wise community!

### KITCHEN

- #1 There are several ways to save water, and they all start with you.
- #2 When washing dishes by hand, don't let the water run. Fill one basin with wash water and the other with rinse water.
- #3 Dishwashers typically use less water than washing dishes by hand. Now, Energy Star dishwashers save even more water and energy.
- #4 If your dishwasher is new, cut back on rinsing. Newer models clean more thoroughly than older ones.
- #5 Designate one glass for your drinking water each day, or refill a water bottle. This will cut down on the number of glasses to wash.
- #6 Soak pots and pans instead of letting the water run while you scrape them clean.
- #7 Use the garbage disposal sparingly. Instead, compost vegetable food waste and save gallons every time.
- #8 Wash your fruits and vegetables in a pan of water instead of running water from the tap.
- #9 Don't use running water to thaw food. For water efficiency and food safety, defrost food in the refrigerator.
- #10 Install an instant water heater near your kitchen sink so you don't have to run the water while it heats up. This also reduces energy costs.
- #11 Keep a pitcher of drinking water in the refrigerator instead of running the tap. This way, every drop goes down you and not the drain.
- #12 Reuse leftover water from cooked or steamed foods to start a nutritious soup, it's one more way to get eight glasses of water a day.
- #13 Cook food in as little water as possible. This also helps it retain more nutrients.
- #14 Select the proper pan size for cooking. Large pans may require more cooking water than necessary.
- #15 If you accidentally drop ice cubes, don't throw them in the sink. Drop them in a house plant instead.



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#16 Collect the water you use while rinsing fruit and vegetables. Use it to water house plants.

#17 When shopping for a new dishwasher, use the Consortium for Energy Efficiency website to compare water use between models.

## **LAUNDRY ROOM**

#18 When doing laundry, match the water level to the size of the load.

#19 Washing dark clothes in cold water saves water and energy, and helps your clothes retain their color.

#20 When shopping for a new washing machine, compare resource savings among Energy Star models. Some can save up to 20 gallons of water per load.

#21 Have a plumber re-route your greywater to trees and plants rather than the sewer line. Check with your city and county for codes.

#22 When buying a washer, check the Consortium for Energy Efficiency website to compare water use between models.

## **BATHROOM**

#23 If your shower fills a one-gallon bucket in less than 20 seconds, replace the showerhead with a WaterSense® labeled model.

#24 Shorten your shower by a minute or two and you'll save up to 150 gallons per month.

#25 Time your shower to keep it under 5 minutes. You'll save up to 1,000 gallons per month.

#26 Toilet leaks can be silent! Be sure to test your toilet for leaks at least once a year.

#27 Put food coloring in your toilet tank. If it seeps into the bowl without flushing, there's a leak. Fix it and start saving gallons.

#28 When running a bath, plug the bathtub before turning on the water. Adjust the temperature as the tub fills.

#29 Upgrade older toilets with water-saving WaterSense® labeled models.

#30 If your toilet flapper doesn't close properly after flushing, replace it.



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#31 Use a WaterSense® labeled showerhead. They're inexpensive, easy to install, and can save you up to 750 gallons a month.

#32 Turn off the water while you brush your teeth and save up to 4 gallons a minute. That's up to 200 gallons a week for a family of four.

#33 If your toilet was installed before 1992, purchasing a WaterSense® labeled toilet can reduce the amount of water used for each flush.

#34 Consider buying a dual-flush toilet. It has two flush options: a half-flush for liquid waste and a full-flush for solid waste.

#35 Plug the sink instead of running the water to rinse your razor and save up to 300 gallons a month.

#36 Turn off the water while washing your hair and save up to 150 gallons a month.

#37 When washing your hands, turn the water off while you lather.

#38 Take 5-minute showers instead of baths. A full bathtub requires up to 70 gallons of water.

#39 Install water-saving aerators on all of your faucets.

#40 Drop tissues in the trash instead of flushing them and save water every time.

#41 Look for WaterSense® labeled toilets, sink faucets, urinals and showerheads.

#42 One drip every second adds up to five gallons per day! Check your faucets and showerheads for leaks.

#43 While you wait for hot water, collect the running water and use it to water plants.

#### **GENERAL INDOOR**

#44 Teach children to turn off faucets tightly after each use.

#45 Watch the Home Water Challenge video or use the Home Water Audit Calculator to see where you can save water.

#46 When the kids want to cool off, use the sprinkler in an area where your lawn needs it most.

#47 Encourage your school system and local government to develop and promote water conservation among children and adults.



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#48 Play fun games while learning how to save water!

#49 Monitor your water bill for unusually high use. Your bill and water meter are tools that can help you discover leaks.

#50 Learn how to use your water meter to check for leaks.

#51 Reward kids for the water-saving tips they follow.

#52 Avoid recreational water toys that require a constant flow of water.

#53 Grab a wrench and fix that leaky faucet. It's simple, inexpensive, and you can save 140 gallons a week.

#54 Hire a GreenPlumber® to help reduce your water, energy, and chemical use.

#55 Be a leak detective! Check all hoses, connectors, and faucets regularly for leaks.

#56 We're more likely to notice leaky faucets indoors, but don't forget to check outdoor faucets, pipes, and hoses.

#57 See a leak you can't fix? Tell a parent, teacher, employer, or property manager, or call a handyman.

#58 At home or while staying in a hotel, reuse your towels.

#59 Make suggestions to your employer or school about ways to save water and money.

#60 Run your washer and dishwasher only when they are full. You can save up to 1,000 gallons a month.

#61 See how your water use stacks up to others by calculating your daily water use.

## **OUTDOOR TIPS**

### **XERISCAPE LANDSCAPING**

#62 Use porous material for walkways and patios to prevent wasteful runoff and keep water in your yard.

#63 Group plants with the same watering needs together to avoid overwatering some while under watering others.

#64 Choose the right plants and watch them thrive in our environment.



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#65 Reduce the amount of lawn in your yard by planting shrubs and ground covers appropriate to your site and region.

#66 Plant species native to your region.

#67 Plant in the spring and fall, when the watering requirements are lower.

#68 When sprucing up your front or backyard, consider xeriscaping. This landscape method uses low-water-use plants to limit your water use.

#69 Consider attending a landscape class hosted by a water provider. Most workshops occur in the spring and fall.

#70 Avoid planting grass in areas that are hard to water, such as steep inclines and isolated strips along sidewalks and driveways.

#71 Leave lower branches on trees and shrubs and allow leaf litter to accumulate on the soil. This keeps the soil cooler and reduces evaporation.

#72 Start a compost pile. Using compost in your garden or flower beds adds water-holding organic matter to the soil.

#73 Use a layer of organic mulch on the surface of your planting beds to minimize weed growth that competes for water.

#74 Spreading a layer of organic mulch around plants helps them retain moisture, saving water, time and money.

#75 Use 2 to 4 inches of organic mulch around plants to reduce evaporation and save hundreds of gallons of water a year.

#76 Visit your local xeriscape garden to view plants that thrive in our hot desert environment.

#77 Next time you add or replace a flower or shrub, choose a low-water-use plant and save up to 550 gallons each year.

#78 Call your local conservation office for more information about xeriscaping with water-thrifty trees, plants, and ground covers.

#79 Collect water from your roof by installing gutters and downspouts. Direct the runoff to plants and trees.



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#80 For automatic water savings, direct water from rain gutters and HVAC systems to water-loving plants in your landscape.

#### **LAWN CARE**

#81 Hire a qualified pro to install your irrigation system and keep it working properly and efficiently.

#82 Hire a Smartscape Certified professional landscaper who has received landscape training specific to the Sonoran Desert.

#83 Adjust your lawn mower to the height of 1.5 to 2 inches. Taller grass shades roots and holds soil moisture better than short grass.

#84 Leave lawn clippings on your grass, this cools the ground and holds in moisture.

#85 If installing a lawn, select a lawn mix or blend that matches your climate and site conditions.

#86 Aerate your lawn periodically. Holes every six inches will allow water to reach the roots, rather than run off the surface.

#87 If walking across the lawn leaves footprints (blades don't spring back up), then it is time to water.

#88 Let your lawn go dormant (brown) during the winter. Dormant grass only needs to be watered every three to four weeks, less if it rains.

#89 Avoid over seeding your lawn with winter grass. Ryegrass needs water every few days, whereas Dormant Bermuda grass needs water monthly.

#90 Remember to weed your lawn and garden regularly. Weeds compete with other plants for nutrients, light and water.

#91 While fertilizers promote plant growth, they also increase water consumption. Apply the minimum amount of fertilizer needed.

#92 Water your summer lawns once every three days and your winter lawn once every five days.

#93 Catch water in an empty tuna can to measure sprinkler output. 3/4 to 1 inch of water is enough to apply each time you irrigate.



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## LANDSCAPE

#94 Read the Landscape Watering by the Numbers guidebook to help you determine how long and how much to water.

#95 Use a trowel, shovel, or soil probe to examine soil moisture depth. If the top two to three inches of soil are dry, it's time to water.

#96 Set a kitchen timer when using the hose as a reminder to turn it off. A running hose can discharge up to 10 gallons per minute.

#97 Check your sprinkler system frequently and adjust sprinklers so only your lawn is watered and not the house, sidewalk or street.

#98 Minimize evaporation by watering during the early morning hours when temperatures are cooler and winds are lighter.

#99 Timing is everything when it comes to irrigation. Learn how to set your controller properly.

#100 Look for WaterSense® labeled irrigation controllers.

#101 Learn how to shut off your automatic watering system in case of malfunctions or rain.

#102 Apply water only as fast as the soil can absorb it.

#103 If water runs off your lawn easily, split your watering time into shorter periods to allow for better absorption.

#104 Water only when necessary. More plants die from over-watering than from under-watering.

#105 Signs of overwatering: Leaves turn lighter shades of green or yellow, young shoots wilt, and sometimes algae or fungi grow.

#106 Adjust your watering schedule each month to match seasonal weather conditions and landscape requirements.

#107 Install a rain sensor on your irrigation controller so your system won't run when it's raining.

#108 Water dry spot by hand instead of running the whole irrigation system longer.

#109 Don't water your lawn on windy days when most of the water blows away or evaporates.

#110 Use drip irrigation for shrubs and trees to apply water directly to the roots, where it's needed.



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#111 Water your plants deeply but less frequently to encourage deep root growth and drought tolerance.

#112 Use sprinklers that deliver big drops of water close to the ground. Smaller drops and mist often evaporate before hitting the ground.

#113 Use a rain barrel to harvest rainwater from gutters for watering gardens and landscapes.

#114 For hanging baskets, planters and pots, put ice cubes on top of the soil to give your plants a cool drink of water without overflow.

#115 Remember to periodically check your sprinkler system valves for leaks, and to keep sprinkler heads in good shape.

#116 Spring is a great time to give your irrigation system a checkup to ensure it's working efficiently.

#117 Pruning properly can help your plants use water more efficiently.

#### **POOL & HOT TUBS**

#118 Use a pool cover to help keep your pool clean, reduce chemical use and prevent water loss through evaporation.

#119 Make sure your swimming pools, fountains and ponds are equipped with recirculating pumps.

#120 If you have an automatic refilling device, check your pool periodically for leaks.

#121 When back-washing your pool, consider using the water on salt-tolerant plants in the landscape.

#122 Minimize or eliminate the use of waterfalls and sprays in your pool. Aeration increases evaporation.

#123 Don't overfill the pool. Lower water levels will reduce water loss due to splashing.

#124 Keep water in the pool when playing, it will save water.

#125 Instead of building a private pool or hot tub, use our community pool.

#126 Trickling or cascading fountains lose less water to evaporation than those that spray water into the air.

#127 Use a grease pencil to conduct a bucket test to check for pool leaks. An unnatural water level drop may indicate a leak.



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## GENERAL OUTDOOR

#128 Winterize outdoor spigots when temperatures dip below freezing to prevent pipes from leaking or bursting.

#129 For more immediate hot water and energy savings, insulate hot water pipes.

#130 Use a commercial car wash that recycles water. Or, wash your car on the lawn, and you'll water your grass at the same time.

#131 Use a hose nozzle or turn off the water while you wash your car. You'll save up to 100 gallons every time.

#132 Wash your pets outdoors, in an area of your lawn that needs water.

#133 When cleaning out fish tanks, give the nutrient-rich water to your non-edible plants.

#134 When you give your pet fresh water, don't throw the old water down the drain. Use it to water your trees or shrubs.

#135 Use a broom instead of a hose to clean patios, sidewalks and driveways, and save water every time.

#136 Evaporative coolers require a seasonal maintenance check. For more efficient cooling, check your evaporative cooler annually.

#137 If you have an evaporative cooler, direct the water drain to plants in your landscape.

#138 Set water softeners for a minimum number of refills to save both water and chemicals, plus energy, too.

#139 If you have an evaporative cooler, install a recirculating pump to keep water from bleeding off with one pass.

#140 Report broken pipes, leaky hydrants and errant sprinklers to property owners or your local water provider.

#141 Know where your master water shut-off valve is located. Were a pipe to burst, this could save gallons of water and prevent damage.

#142 Install a thermostat and timer on your evaporative cooler so it only operates when necessary.



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## OFFICE

#10 Install an instant water heater near your kitchen sink so you don't have to run the water while it heats up. This also reduces energy costs.

#29 Upgrade older toilets with water-saving WaterSense® labeled models.

#39 Install water-saving aerators on all of your faucets.

#41 Look for WaterSense® labeled toilets, sink faucets, urinals and showerheads.

#54 Hire a GreenPlumber® to help reduce your water, energy, and chemical use.

#143 Some commercial refrigerators and ice-makers are cooled with water. Upgrade to air-cooled appliances for significant water savings.

#144 Post a hotline in bathrooms and kitchens to report leaks or water waste to facility managers or maintenance personnel.

#145 Create a suggestion and incentives system at your organization to recognize water-saving ideas.

#146 Include a water-saving tip in your employee newsletter. Find 100+ tips at [wateruseitwisely.com](http://wateruseitwisely.com).

#147 Implement a water management plan for your facility, then educate employees on good water habits through newsletters and posters.

#148 Publish your organization's monthly water use to show progress toward water-saving goals.

#149 Invite your water utility conservation staff to your organization for Earth Day and other environmental events to help promote water savings.

#150 Water audit your facility to find out your recommended water use, then monitor your utility bills to gauge your monthly consumption.

#151 Have maintenance personnel regularly check your facilities for leaks, drips and other water waste.

#152 If you use processed water in your business or facility, look into water recycling.

#153 Contact your water utility to see if rebates are available for purchasing water-efficient fixtures, equipment or for facility audits.

#154 Consider and compare water use when purchasing ice makers, dishwashers, reverse osmosis units, coolers and cleaning equipment.



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#155 Become or appoint a water ambassador within your organization who creates, implements and maintains your water conservation program.

#156 Become a proud WaterSense® partner and let all your customers know.

#157 As part of the WaterSense® Fix-A-Leak Week in March, plan an employee campaign to look for leaks.

#158 Determine how your on-site water is being used by installing sub-meters where feasible, then monitoring for savings.

#159 Conduct a facility water use inventory and identify water management goals.

#160 Don't forget hidden water use costs, like energy for pumping, heating and cooling, chemical treatment, and damage and sewer expenses.

#161 Show your company's dedication to water conservation through a policy statement. Commit management, staff and resources to the effort.

#162 Shut off water to unused areas of your facility to eliminate waste from leaks or unmonitored use.

#163 Create a goal of how much water your company can save and plan a celebration once that goal is met.

#164 Ask employees for suggestions on saving water and give prizes for the best ideas. Incentivize it!

#165 Write feature articles on your employee website that highlight water-saving ideas and successes.

#166 Test your co-workers or employees on topics like xeriscape, WaterSense®, and high-efficiency toilets. See how water-wise they are.

#167 Hire a WaterSense® irrigation partner to help with your landscape.

#168 Saving water on your landscape adds up quickly. Send the person in charge of your landscape to an irrigation workshop.

#169 Marry the weather with your landscape water use. Water use should decrease during rainy periods and increase during hot, dry periods.

#170 Visit your local Water Conservation office's website to get information on programs available to businesses.



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#171 Make sure your contract plumber and/or maintenance personnel knows about GreenPlumbers®.

#172 Ask your company to support water conservation events and education. ProjectWet hosts local events throughout the country.

#173 Support Tap Into Quality and forgo those plastic water bottles to lower your carbon footprint.

#174 Scrape dishes rather than rinsing them before washing.

#175 Use water-conserving icemakers.

#176 A recent study showed that 99% of business managers surveyed ranked water conservation as a “top five” priority over the next decade.

#177 If your facility relies on cooling towers, have maintenance maximize cycles of concentration by providing efficient water treatment.

#178 Be sure your irrigation system is watering only the areas intended, with no water running onto walks, streets or down the gutter.

#179 While cleaning sidewalks, a hose and nozzle use 8-12 gallons of water per minute. A pressurized Waterbroom® uses closer to 3 gallons.

#180 Inspect your landscape irrigation system regularly for leaks or broken sprinkler heads and adjust pressures to specification.

#181 Give your landscape proper amounts of irrigation water. Determine water needs, water deeply but infrequently, and adjust to the season.

#182 Establish a monthly water budget for your landscape based on the water needs of your plants.

#183 Limit turf areas at your facility. Instead, landscape using xeriscape principles to cut water use in half.

#184 Put decorative fountains on timers and use only during work or daylight hours. Check for leaks if you have automatic refilling devices.

#185 Wash company vehicles at commercial car washers that recycle water.

#186 Wash company vehicles as needed rather than on a schedule. Stretch out the time in between washes.



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#187 Consider turning your high-maintenance water feature/fountain into a low-maintenance art feature or planter.

#188 When buying new appliances, consider those that offer cycle and load size adjustments. They are more water and energy efficient.

#189 Support projects that use reclaimed wastewater for irrigation and industrial uses.

#190 When ice cubes are leftover from your drink, don't throw them out. Pour them on a plant.

## **KIDS**

#1 There are a number of ways to save water, and they all start with you.

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#5 Designate one glass for your drinking water each day, or refill a water bottle. This will cut down on the number of glasses to wash.

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*Watering saving tips from [www.wateruseitwisely.com](http://www.wateruseitwisely.com)*



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