

Water Conservation Tips from the State of New Mexico

For rural New Mexico, the best water conservation tips focus on outdoor landscaping and efficient indoor use. In general, prioritize drought-tolerant plants, water during cooler hours (early morning/late evening), use mulch, and install efficient irrigation systems like drip or soaker hoses. Indoors, fix leaks immediately, install low-flow fixtures, and avoid water waste by taking shorter showers, and better managing faucet and appliance use.

Outdoor and landscaping

- **Water wisely:** Water in the early morning or late evening to reduce evaporation. Avoid watering on windy days.
- **Change your landscape:** Replace thirsty lawns with native, drought-resistant plants like blue grama or buffalograss.
- **Use mulch:** Apply a layer of mulch around trees and plants to keep the soil moist and reduce evaporation.
- **Improve irrigation:** Install water-efficient drip irrigation systems for shrubs, flowers, and trees. If using sprinklers, ensure they water only the landscape and not patios or driveways, and check them for leaks in the spring.
- **Clean smart:** Use a broom to clean patios, portals and driveways instead of a hose. When washing your car, use a shut-off nozzle and a bucket.

Indoor and appliance tips

- **Fix leaks:** A leaky faucet or toilet can waste a lot of water. Check for toilet leaks by putting a few drops of food coloring in the tank; if color appears in the bowl, fix the flapper.
- **Upgrade fixtures:** Install low-flow or high-efficiency toilets and low-flow shower heads and faucet aerators.
- **Take shorter showers:** Aim for shorter shower times. A 10-minute shower with a low-flow head uses about 25 gallons of water.
- **Run full loads:** Only run dishwashers and washing machines when they are full.
- **Conserve in the kitchen:** Turn off the faucet while brushing your teeth, washing your face or washing dishes. Keep a pitcher of water in the fridge instead of running the faucet for cold water.
- **Use appliances efficiently:** Use the garbage disposal sparingly and consider composting food waste instead. Never use the toilet as a trash can.

Additional tips

- **Insulate pipes:** Insulate hot-water pipes so you won't have to run the water as long to get it hot.
- **Collect grey water:** Catch water from showers while it's warming up to use for watering plants or flushing the toilet.
- **Check with your supplier:** Contact your local water provider to see if there are any specific water restrictions or programs in your area.

