



## **FROM A GARDENING PERSPECTIVE...**

### **Water Conservation NOW!**

By

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Imagine what it would be like to turn on the tap and not get at least a drop of water. People in some parts of the country know this does happen. They are learning how to conserve water. They know that water is a limited resource. Water shortages are now a local and regional problem. With the current drought in Palo Pinto County, it is wise to learn how to conserve water.

By becoming more aware of your water use habits—both old and new—you can reduce water use, eliminate waste, and save energy and money.

Following is a list suggesting ways to conserve water. As you read this list, check the steps you have already taken to conserve water. Note what you still need to do to become a better manager of water resources.

Concentrate on the big water uses first.

1. Inspect your household plumbing system. Repair all leaky faucets inside and out. Put food coloring in the toilet tank. If color leaks into the bowl, the toilet needs repair.
2. Teach children to turn off faucets quickly and firmly.
3. Replace old toilets with 1.6 gallon flush toilets or experiment with putting a 1 quart plastic bottle filled with water into the tank.
4. Wash clothes only when really necessary, and always wash a full load.
5. Urge family members to take 4 minute showers instead of tub baths. Turn off water while you soap up or apply shampoo.
6. Turn off water while you shave, brush teeth, etc.
7. Use a pan of water when peeling and cleaning vegetables and fruits rather than letting the sink tap run.
8. Run the garbage disposal less often.
9. Run only full loads in the dishwasher.
10. When washing dishes by hand, have one sink full of soapy water and one full of clean for rinsing.
11. Wash your car less often.

12. Use a broom, not the hose, to “sweep” the garage, driveway and sidewalks.
13. Plan landscaping and gardening to minimize water requirements.
14. Mulch your plants to help retain moisture in the soil (and control weeds).
15. Experiment with trickle or drip irrigation.
16. If you are using a garden hose or sprinkler system, water deeply but less often. Less frequent but heavier lawn watering encourages deeper root systems that can endure long dry spells.
17. Collect rain water and use it to water your garden, potted plants and house plants.
18. Use porous materials for sidewalks and patios to keep water on your property and prevent wasteful runoff.
19. Use conservative methods even if you draw water from a well, creek, river or lake for irrigation.
20. Try to think globally instead of just for yourself. Water shortages affect everyone.

If you have questions about conserving water, collecting rainwater and maximizing your landscape beauty, please call the Palo Pinto Agrilife Extension Office at 940-659-1228. Also check their website [palopinto.agrilife.org](http://palopinto.agrilife.org) Click on the Master Gardeners Tab.