



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
Water Department

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 1, 2004

CONTACT:

Ruby Alejandria
(619) 232-2112 x106

rubya@collaborativeservices.biz

Water Savings for the Holidays

By Chris Robbins, Supervising Management Analyst, City of San Diego's Water Conservation Program

SAN DIEGO - What does water have to do with the holidays? Water impacts everything from food preparation to the clean-up process. For example, a typical holiday turkey dinner for eight needs more than 42,000 gallons of water in food growth and preparation. That's enough water to fill a 30 foot-by-50 foot swimming pool. During the clean up process, before visitors arrive and after the holidays' large meals, appliances and fixtures such as dishwashers, clothes washers, showers and toilets, will be used more often. However, there are ways to minimize utility use and lower bills while hosting out-of-town guests for the holidays.

"You can do your part in conserving water without having to compromise convenience and comfort during the holidays," said Chris Robbins, Supervising Management Analyst with the City of San Diego's Water Conservation Program. "The solution is simple: integrate water-wise behaviors into your daily routine and take advantage of available resources. In the long run, you'll improve your quality of life beyond special occasions."

Take charge of your water usage by encouraging water-wise behaviors and setting an example for your guests. Here are some easy to implement water-saving tips:

Food Preparation Tips

- ◆ Save 60 gallons a week by scraping off food scraps into the garbage can, rather than rinsing them into the sink's garbage disposal.
- ◆ Save 50 gallons a week by defrosting frozen foods in the refrigerator the night before it's needed instead of running hot water over it the same day.
- ◆ Save 30 gallons a week by rinsing vegetables and fruits in a sink or pan filled with water instead of under running water. As a double bonus, use this water on houseplants.

Dishwasher and Clothes Washer Tips

- ◆ Save 100 gallons per week by hand washing dishes at least once a day, using less detergent to cut down on rinsing.
- ◆ Save 30 gallons a week by running a full load in the dishwasher.
- ◆ Save 100 gallons per week by doing only full loads of laundry.

Bathroom Fixture Tips

- ◆ Save 230 gallons a week by replacing your regular showerheads with low-flow showerheads.
- ◆ Save 350 gallons a week by using an ultra-low flush toilet model.
- ◆ Save 50 gallons a week per person by having a bucket ready to capture cold water while waiting for hot water. Use it to water plants or run the garbage disposal.

Another way to minimize utility bills and prepare for your holiday guests is to take advantage of City-sponsored programs and services available to City of San Diego residents at no cost. For example, the City of San Diego offers vouchers for purchases of ultra-low flush toilets and high efficiency clothes washers. The City also offers free services like the Landscape Watering Calculator or Residential Water Survey Program, which can help to lower your utility bill as well.

Services and Programs

- ◆ Save up to \$75 dollars on the purchase of an ultra-low-flow toilet that uses 60 percent less water than regular toilets and saves up to 2.5 gallons per toilet per flush.
- ◆ Save up to \$100 dollars on the purchase of a high efficiency clothes washer that uses 40 percent less water and 55 percent less energy than regular washing machines, and also reduces drying time by 50 percent.
- ◆ Reduce outdoor water usage by accessing the online Landscape Watering Calculator. This easy-to-use tool is designed to produce a customized sprinkler system schedule for the optimum amount of water your lawn and plants need each month of the year.
- ◆ Reduce daily water consumption by participating in the Residential Water Survey Program. This program provides a complete interior and exterior water usage analysis, a check for leaks, the installation of water saving devices, as well as water-efficient landscape and irrigation recommendations.

Your houseguests may come and go, but your usage of water is a daily occurrence. By building a foundation of water wise behaviors and eliminating water waste, you can save money on your utility bills while making conservation a part of your life.

The Water Conservation Program reduces water demand through promoting or providing incentives for the installation of hardware that provides permanent water savings, and by providing services and information to help San Diegans make better decisions about water use. For more information about Water Conservation, visit www.sandiego.gov/water or call 619.515.3500.