

# Together we can make every drop count

Calgary and southern Alberta are currently experiencing drought conditions. We're taking this risk seriously and we all need to do our part, big or small, to conserve water and use it wisely at our homes and in our yards.



## Prepare your yard for dry conditions



Add mulch around trees and shrubs to retain moisture and keep an even soil temperature.



Add a base of at least twenty centimeters (8 inches) of good quality soil for a healthy garden or lawn that retains water.



Mow less often to keep your grass 5 to 7 cm (2 to 3 inches) high to shade the soil.



Point your downspout on to landscaped areas of your property, ideally your garden.



Install a rain barrel (or two!) to capture and use rainwater for watering gardens and plants.

## Use water outdoors as efficiently as possible



Watch the forecast and skip watering when it has rained or is forecast to rain.



Water when it's coolest – early in the morning or later in the evening.



Water low and slow – use a soaker hose, watering can or drip irrigation for your garden.



Only give plants the water they need. Read plant tags to know how much to water your garden.



Prioritize watering trees during drought conditions.

## Create a yard for Calgary's climate



If you're adding plants to your garden, choose water-wise, drought tolerant plants. Remember, new plants need lots of water to get established, especially during the heat of summer, and outdoor water restrictions may be in effect.



Consider removing lawn where you can and replacing with drought tolerant gardens and ground coverings.

## Other ways to save water outdoors



Sweep your sidewalk and driveway rather than washing with water.



Irrigation systems are one of the most common household leaks. Schedule annual maintenance with an irrigation professional and check often for leaks.

## Make simple changes to your daily routine



Take short showers. A five-minute shower with an old showerhead can easily use 75 litres of water.



Fill the tub to only halfway when bathing children.



Use your dishwasher only when you have a full load or run it on a shorter cycle if you must run it when not completely full.



Wash only full loads of laundry. Set the water-level appropriately if you must wash a small load of laundry.



Place vegetables and fruit in a partially filled sink or pot, then rinse them.

## Fix household leaks



Check your toilets for leaks by putting a few drops of food colouring in the tank. If water in bowl changes colour after 15 minutes you have a leak.



Use your water meter to check for other leaks inside your home every six months as part of regular home maintenance.



Fix any leaking toilets, taps, showerheads, and any other water using devices.



Service your furnace humidifier, water softener and hot water tank regularly.



If you have travel plans, consider asking someone to check on your home while you're away.

## Invest in high-efficiency appliances and fixtures



Install high-efficiency toilets and faucets.



Replace showerheads with low-flow models.



Install 3.8 litres per minute faucet aerators on all bathroom sink faucets.



Replace your old dishwasher with a low water use dishwasher. Newer models will save on your energy bill as well.



Replace your old washer with a low water use washer. Consider buying a front-load washer. They use at least 50% less water than older top-load models.

## Stay informed of outdoor water restrictions

Outdoor water restrictions may be needed to ensure there's enough water to meet Calgary's essential needs, including water for drinking and fighting fires, as well as to support our neighbours and river health.

Visit [calgary.ca/drought](http://calgary.ca/drought) for the latest status and follow outdoor water restrictions if they are in effect.