

## Why Water Conservation?

The water that Earth's inhabitants rely on is drawn from rivers, lakes, and underground aquifers. **Only 1% of Earth's water is usable**, and this 1% not only is used by humans for consumption but also nurtures wildlife and natural vegetation.

Here in Woodstock, our water is pumped from natural, shallow wells to two water treatment plants where it is treated and sent into the distribution system. An average of 2.3 million gallons per day are distributed to Woodstock's water customers.

Not only does water conservation protect this valuable, finite natural resource but it will also reduce your water and sewer bill. Every drop that flows down a drain or spills into a gutter unused is a drop you pay for not only in water and sewer charges but also gas or electric charges if that wasted water is heated.

According to the American Water Works Association, the following percentages indicate how water is used in our homes: 27% - toilets, 22% - clothes washers, 17% - showers, 16% - faucets, 14% - leaks, 2% - baths, 1% - dishwashers, and 1% - other domestic uses. By following some or all of the conservation tips in this pamphlet, you will not only be saving money, you'll also be saving water for future generations.

### Every Drop Counts!

## Inside Water



- Repair all leaks! Repair a dripping faucet by replacing washers. If the faucet drips at one drop per second, that wastes 2,700 gallons per year! Check toilets by adding food coloring to the tank—do not flush. If the color appears in the bowl within an hour, there is a leak.
- Use dishwashers and washing machines only when they are fully loaded.
- Don't let the water run while brushing your teeth, washing your face, or shaving.
- Insulate hot water pipes. This keeps the water in the pipes warmer reducing the time to run it.
- Store drinking water in the refrigerator. Wash container weekly.
- Do not use running water to thaw meat. Rather, thaw meat overnight in the refrigerator.
- Replace your showerhead with a water-efficient or low-flow showerhead.
- Replace aerators on all faucets with flow restrictors.
- Take short, quick showers rather than baths. A typical bath uses approximately 40 gallons of water, whereas a typical shower uses about 20 gallons.

## Outside Water

- Purchase a rain barrel to capture rain water to be used for watering flower and vegetable gardens
- Don't water if rain is in the forecast.
- Water when temperatures are mild (before 9 am) and when winds are calm. If you water during the hot midday sun, you can lose up to 30% of water to evaporation.
- Use a broom to clean driveways, patios, and sidewalks. Using a broom will get them clean without wasting gallons of water.
- Don't let the water run while washing your car. Consider washing your car on the lawn so that no water is wasted.
- Mulch trees, shrubs, and flower beds. By using organic mulches, you help to reduce evaporation and keep the soil and roots cool and protected. Mulches naturally break down and provide organic matter to the soil. Mulch also discourages weeds.



- Install a drip irrigation system and soaker hoses in flower and vegetable gardens to encourage strong root systems and reduce the loss of water to evaporation.
- Raise your lawn mower's cutting height. Longer grass will hold moisture and shield roots from midday sun heat eliminating evaporation.

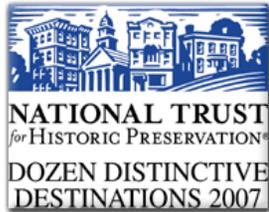
## *Did you know?*

- Water is the most common substance on earth, but only 1% of it is suitable for drinking.
- Water dissolves more substances than any other liquid. Wherever it travels, water carries chemicals, minerals, and nutrients with it.
- Over 38 billion gallons of water are processed per day in the United States; this equals 13.8 trillion gallons per year.
- The average household uses over 100,000 gallons of water per year.
- There are approximately one million miles of water pipes underground in the U.S.; enough to circle the earth 40 times.
- A five-minute shower will use 15 to 25 gallons of water.
- An automatic dishwasher uses between 9 to 12 gallons of water.
- **Water is the most important resource/element on our planet; more so than oil, natural gas, minerals or any other resource you can imagine.**  
*Treat it with respect and conserve it.*

Eleven in a series of brochures as part of the "Being a Good Neighbor" program designed to inform and educate the residents of Woodstock, Illinois.

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Woodstock is proud to have been recognized as a 2007 Distinctive Destination by the National Trust for Historic Preservation



City of  
**Woodstock**

# 11 **Water Conservation**

Help Yourself/Help Your Neighbor



## **Being a Good Neighbor**

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