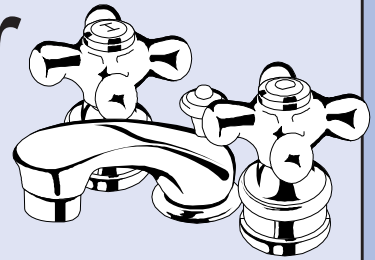




Florida Public Service Commission

# Consumer Bulletin

Braulio L. Baez, Chairman



## Residential Water Conservation

Florida is fortunate to have the country's largest underground freshwater reserves. Because Florida's aquifers hold so much potable water, many residents view the supply as endless. Unfortunately, it is not.

In many parts of our state, there is visible evidence of the severe depletion that is occurring within our underground reservoir system due to population growth, development, and saltwater intrusion. In some areas, water requires significant treatment before it is appropriate for human consumption. Coastal cities that need additional water supplies to keep up with demand often must either tap into inland water supplies or use alternate resources. Both options are expensive and are guaranteed to drive up the cost of water, thus increasing your water bills. Conservation can delay or perhaps eliminate a utility's need to develop new, and potentially more costly, water supplies.

The Florida Public Service Commission believes it is important for consumers to be informed and active in the conservation of our water supply. There are a number of simple steps every residential consumer can take around the house to decrease use (which can result in lower bills) and save for the future:

### KITCHEN / LAUNDRY ROOM

- ◆ Wash only full loads in your dishwasher. Automatic dishwashers use 20 gallons of water per cycle, regardless of load size.
- ◆ When you wash dishes by hand, don't leave the water running.
- ◆ Do not use running water to thaw meat or frozen foods.
- ◆ Use the proper load setting when you use your washing machine.
- ◆ Use your garbage disposal sparingly.
- ◆ Repair leaks at faucets – indoors and out.
- ◆ During basic maintenance or repairs, check all pipes in order to prevent future leaks.

### OUTDOORS

- ◆ Water your lawn between the hours of 6 p.m. and 9 a.m. The sun will not evaporate the water as quickly as in the afternoon. A hearty rain can eliminate the need for watering up to two weeks.
- ◆ Do not water during windy conditions.
- ◆ Use a sprinkler timer. If you don't have one, use the kitchen timer.

- ◆ Let water sink in slowly. Water applied too quickly runs off.
- ◆ Use mulch in plant beds to control weeds and retain moisture.
- ◆ Use a broom, not a hose, to clean driveways and sidewalks.
- ◆ Make sure all the water from sprinklers falls on your grass and shrubs, not on paved areas.

### BATHROOM

- ◆ Lower the water level in the toilet.
- ◆ Throw tissues and other trash in a waste basket, not the toilet.
- ◆ Avoid leaving the water running while brushing your teeth or shaving.
- ◆ Take showers instead of baths.
- ◆ Replace your toilet or shower head with a low-flow water-saving model.
- ◆ Check the toilet for worn-out, corroded or bent parts. Most replacement parts are inexpensive, readily available, and easily installed.

Your water meter can also be used to detect leaks. Check your water meter while no water is being used. If the dials are moving, then you have a water leak. Leaks are often the result of a worn-out washer in a faucet. Even the slightest leak can cause a significant increase in a consumer's water bill. Similarly, if you have a well at home, check your pump periodically. If the pump kicks on and off while water is not being used, you have a leak.

For additional information about water conservation, please contact the Water Management District in your area. The PSC can also assist by providing you with a free copy of its "Conserve Your World" brochure. This brochure outlines some helpful ways to conserve in and around your home and is available in English and in Spanish. For a copy of this brochure, please call the PSC at **1-800-342-3552**. You may also e-mail us at [contact@psc.state.fl.us](mailto:contact@psc.state.fl.us), or visit our Internet home page at <http://www.floridapsc.com> for more information.

**Braulio L. Baez is the Chairman of the Florida Public Service Commission. The PSC sets the rates regulated utility companies charge for natural gas, electric and telephone service within the state. In 36 counties, it sets the price you pay for the water you drink, if your water company is privately owned.**