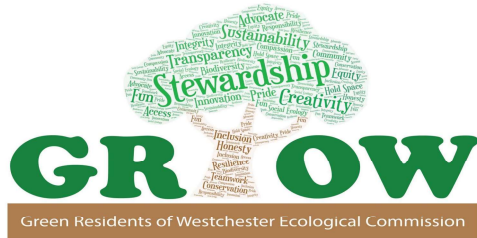


WATER SUSTAINABILITY AT HOME

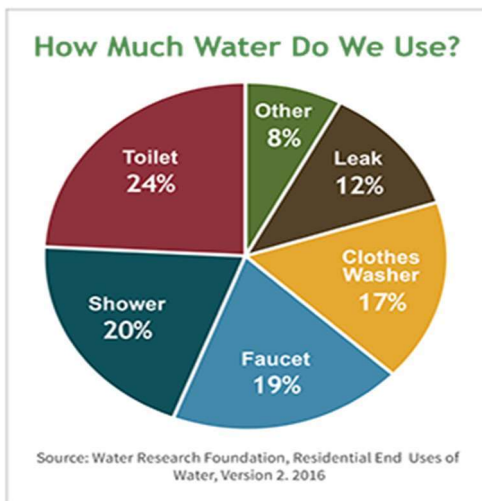


Mariana Nicolae, GROW Commissioner
mnicolae@westchester-il.gov

Climate change is affecting water all over the planet, it's becoming scarcer in many regions, and droughts can create destructive sand and dust storms – moving billions of tons of sand across continents. While deserts expand, it reduces land available to grow food. Many people are now facing the threat of not having enough water on a regular basis.

In the US, we are fortunate to have easy access to some of the safest treated water in the world—just by turning on the tap. We wake up in the morning, take a shower, brush our teeth, grab a cup of coffee, and head out for the day. Water is an important part of our daily lives and we use it for a wide variety of purposes, but do we really understand how much we use?

The average American family uses more than 300 gallons of water per day at home.



When remodeling a house, it is advisable to replace the water guzzling fixtures with WaterSense certified

ones, available at local stores, (Home Depot, Menards, Lowes, etc.)

Residential fixtures certified by WaterSense include toilets, showerheads, and bathroom faucets. They will save approximately 25-30% of your water consumption compared to the old models and can be identified by this seal:



WaterSense Toilets – maximum 1.28 gpf (gallons per flush) for a single flush

Toilets are fixtures that might last 30 years and the old models could have been designed to deliver 3.5 gpf or 1.6 gpf. New models with the WaterSense label should deliver no more than 1.28 gpf and the whole contents would be evacuated.

WaterSense Showerheads – maximum 2.0 gpm (gallons per min)

Showerheads were not regulated products in the past and they could have emptied the water tank heater within two showers. WaterSense certification for the new showerheads can achieve 1.75 or 2.0 gpm at 80 psi (pounds per square inch).

WaterSense Bathroom Faucets – maximum 1.5 gpm (gallons per min)

Bathroom faucets certified as WaterSense shall not deliver more than 1.5 gpm (gallons per min) at 80 psi. Also, it is important to check for **Lead Free** certification for all faucets purchased to be used in your home.

Other tips to save water at home include:

- Use Rain Barrels (55 gal) to collect rain water for usage in the garden
- Turn off the water when is not being used i.e., when brushing your teeth.
- Use the dishwasher and laundry when they are full
- Fix plumbing leaks
- Use drip irrigation to water plants