

Water Conservation Best Practices

Water is a limited and valuable resource, and it is important to use water efficiently and reduce unnecessary usage. There are many ways to conserve water each day. The St. Johns County Utility Department is here to help guide you with these water conservation best practices.

Have a Florida Friendly Yard

- Use Florida Friendly techniques for a beautiful yard and garden! Landscape Irrigation can account for 50% of water use, but can be significantly reduced with a Florida Friendly yard. To learn more, visit <https://waterlessflorida.com/> and <https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/>.
- Use Drip Line and Micro-Spray irrigation to promote healthy plants, reduce weeds, and save water, money and time.



- Apply moderate amounts of water to create a healthy, drought- and stress-tolerant lawn. Over-watering creates shallow roots that are susceptible to insects, and promotes weed growth, disease and fungus.
 - Follow your watering schedule of 1 or 2 days depending on the season. For details, visit <http://www.sjcfl.us/ProtectOurWater/Watering.aspx>
 - Saturate the root zone then let soil dry to encourage healthy, deep root growth. Apply water to revitalize the grass, typically $\frac{1}{2}$ " , and never more than $\frac{3}{4}$ ". For most irrigation systems, this is 15 minutes per zone, but not more than 25 minutes.
 - Use a rain gauge to monitor rain and sprinklers. If your lawn has received 1" , you can pause your irrigation system for the week. This guide provides expert advice for watering a healthy Florida lawn. <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/lh025>
- Mulch your garden beds to retain more soil moisture, saving you water and money.



- Check that your sprinklers are only spraying where needed, and not on streets, sidewalks and driveways.
- Use a rain barrel to collect water to use later for watering plants and gardens.
- Cut back on your plant watering needs by pruning in the early spring and only when necessary.

Check your Usage through Our Customer Portal.

- St. Johns County Utilities provides a Customer Portal, where customers can view usage statistics, compare their usage against temperature and rainfall, and receive custom usage alerts via email and text message. Residents and businesses are encouraged to track their water usage through the portal where you can see your consumption on an hour by hour basis, set alerts for out of the ordinary consumption, and much more. To get started, visit <http://www.sjcf.us/Utilities/WaterUse.aspx>

Check for Leaks

Common types of leaks found in the home are worn toilet flappers, dripping faucets, and leaking valves. A leak at one drip per second can waste more than 3,000 gallons annually.

- Check for leaks twice a year to prevent water loss.
- Check indoors for leaky faucets, showerheads, and pipes. Check toilets for leaks at their connections and commonly from worn flappers.
- Check outdoors for leaky spigots and hose connections. Check your irrigation system and regularly check for broken sprinklers.
- Check your pool for leaks by measuring loss rate.
- For further information and tips, visit: <https://www.epa.gov/watersense/fix-leak-week>

Everyday Conservation Tips

- Only run the dishwasher or washing machine when they are full.
- Choose WaterSense labeled products in your home, yard, and business. <https://www.epa.gov/watersense>
- Shorten your shower by three minutes to save up to 7 gallons of water per shower.
- Install a water aerator to limit water flow without disrupting water pressure.
- Cover your pool to help prevent evaporation.
- Use a broom or blower instead of a hose to clean your driveway and sidewalks.
- Use a spray nozzle to stop water flow when washing cars, and other activities with hoses.
- Save water and prevent pipe damage to pipes by avoiding these non-flushable items: <https://www.sjcf.us/Utilities/Pretreatment.aspx>

