

# Water Conservation

As the demand for water increases with growth and our infrastructure ages, many water suppliers are facing water supply challenges. One of these challenges is the amount of water that public water suppliers are allowed to withdraw from their water sources. The State Department of Environmental Protection regulates how much water is withdrawn and issues withdrawal permits for this use. Many water suppliers, including the Town of Billerica, are finding themselves very close to their withdrawal limits. The need to use our water efficiently is becoming critical to the long term health and viability of both our water supplies and natural resources. Below is an outline of the four stages of Water Conservation, full text is included in the General By-Laws, available on the Town of Billerica's web site located at [www.town.billerica.ma.us](http://www.town.billerica.ma.us) (click on Town Clerk-Documents-Town By Laws-Article VIII, Section 6)

## Stage I – Effective May 1 – October 1 Annually *Voluntary* Water Conservation

Outside water usage limited to odd – even allocation program. Odd numbered street addresses may water on odd numbered calendar days and even numbered addresses may water on even numbered calendar days.

## Stage II – Mandatory Water Conservation

Outside water usage limited to odd – even allocation program.

	<b>Residential</b>	<b>Commercial/Industrial</b>
<b>First Violation</b>	<b>Written Citation</b>	<b>Written Citation</b>
<b>Second Violation</b>	<b>\$50.00</b>	<b>\$100.00</b>
<b>Subsequent Violations</b>	<b>\$100.00</b>	<b>\$200.00</b>

## Stage III – Mandatory Water Conservation

Lawn sprinklers, irrigation systems, soakers and unattended hoses forbidden. Outside water usage restricted to use of hand held hose for no more than one (1) hour during off-peak hours as determined by the DPW Director.

	<b>Residential</b>	<b>Commercial/Industrial</b>
<b>First Violation</b>	<b>Written Citation</b>	<b>Written Citation</b>
<b>Subsequent Violations</b>	– termination of service plus costs of termination and restoration.	

## Stage IV – Total Mandatory Water Conservation

All outside water use is forbidden.

	<b>Residential</b>	<b>Commercial/Industrial</b>
<b>First Violation</b>	<b>Written Citation</b>	<b>Written Violation</b>
<b>Subsequent Violations</b>	– termination of service plus costs of termination and restoration.	

# Water Conservation Tips

## Bathrooms

- Turn off the tap while brushing your teeth or shaving. Save 4-10 gallons a day
- Never use your toilet as a wastebasket. Save 3-7 gallons per flush
- Don't take marathon showers. Five minutes will get you clean. Save 3-7 gallons per shower
- Close your tub drain before turning on the water. Save 3 gallons or more
- Fill your bathtub only halfway. Save 5 gallons or more. Saves in hot water costs, too.

## Kitchen and Laundry Areas

- Fill your sink and basin when washing and rinsing dishes. Saves 8-15 gallons per day. Saves in hot water costs, too.
- Run your dishwasher only when full. Save up to 15 gallons per load. Saves in hot water costs, too.
- Wash vegetables and fruit in a basin. Use a vegetable brush to remove dirt. Save 2-4 gallons per day.
- Run your garbage disposal only when necessary. Save 2-7 gallons per minute.
- Run the washing machine only when full and adjust the water level setting carefully. Washing machines use 22-25 gallons per load. Save the water for 1-2 loads every week. Saves in hot water costs, too.

## Garden and Landscaping Tips

- Water in the cool parts of the day (early morning is the best) to cut down on evaporation
- Add compost to your soil to improve its water holding capacity. (Mulch, which can be made from readily available wood chips or leaf mold, act as a blanket to keep in moisture and help prevent erosion, soil compression, and weeds.)
- Check for and repair leaky hose connections and sprinkler valves. Small leaks can be very wasteful.
- Ask your nursery person about low water using turf and raise your lawnmower cutting height. Longer grass blades help shade each other and cut down on evaporation.

- Water trees and shrubs, which have deep root systems, longer and less frequently than shallow-rooted plants which require smaller amounts of water, more often.
- Porous paving materials such as brick, decomposed granite, or gravel used in patios and walkways help keep water in the garden rather than in the gutter.
- Timing devices allow efficient watering on a schedule suited to each area of the landscape – installing a rain sensor will prevent watering when it's not necessary.
- Using a drip irrigation system applies water slowly, reducing run-off and promoting deep rooting.
- Always remember the one-inch rule: Don't over water!!! Established lawns and shrubs and most vegetables and flowers need just one inch of water a week. If there has been an inch of rainfall during the week, you don't need to water at all.
- How can you tell if your yard has received an inch of water? Collect rainfall or sprinkler water in a container such as a coffee can, then measure with a ruler. Inexpensive gauges are available at most garden centers.

You may also pick up your water conservation kits from the Water Billing Office in the Town Hall at 365 Boston Road, Room 213 Monday through Friday 8:30 am – 4:00 pm or stop by the Water Treatment Plant at 270 Treble Cove Road, Monday through Friday 7:30 am – 3:00 pm.