

Water Conservation for Carroll County Residents



Water Conservation and Why It Is Important

Drought: Water conservation helps mitigate the impacts of drought by reducing water demand during periods of limited supply. Conserving water during drought conditions ensures that essential needs are met and reduces the strain on public water systems and private wells.

Protecting Public Water Supply Wells: Water conservation is essential for safeguarding public water supply wells from potential factors that may take them offline, such as contamination. By reducing water consumption, communities can maintain the integrity of their water sources and ensure the availability of safe drinking water.

Climate Change: Climate change can exacerbate water scarcity and alter precipitation patterns, leading to increased variability in water availability. Conserving water helps communities adapt to changing climate conditions by ensuring a sustainable supply of water for current and future needs.

Ecosystem Health: Water conservation plays a vital role in preserving ecosystems and biodiversity. Conserving water supports the health of aquatic habitats, wetlands, and wildlife that depend on freshwater resources for survival.

Sustainable Development: Water conservation is essential for promoting sustainable development and responsible resource management. By using water efficiently, communities can meet current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Local Requirements for Water Conservation

Freedom/Sykesville: The County does not currently have a policy for restrictions on residential water use due to drought.

Hampstead: The Town imposes both voluntary and mandatory restrictions as conditions warrant. The Council enacts a resolution when these measures are necessary. Residents may be fined if they fail to implement restrictions. More information can be found in the [Town Code §§132-37 to 132-39](#). Residents are notified of restrictions via local newspaper, social media, and the [Town of Hampstead website](#).

Manchester: The Town imposes conservation measures and/or drought restrictions for residents when there is a drought. Some measures are voluntary and some mandatory, according to the policies set in the Town drought management plan. These restrictions are lifted when water levels return to a pre-determined state. [Contact the Town](#) for specifics on when water restrictions might be imposed, what they are, and current status.

Mount Airy: The Mayor issues an executive order when water restrictions are imposed. The decision is based on state drought status, groundwater levels, precipitation, and input from water supply staff. The measures may be voluntary or mandatory, depending on the severity of the drought. The Town [website](#), social media, e-newsletters, and notes on the water bills provide information.

New Windsor: The Town Director of Public Works determines when water restrictions are imposed. They are voluntary unless mandated by [Maryland Department of the Environment](#) (MDE). The decision is based on, among other things, monitoring reports, well levels, and recharge rates. Information about water restrictions can be found on the Town's [website](#), social media, and via door hangers.

Taneytown: The City imposes restrictions for residents via an executive order of the Mayor, based on recommendations from the City Department of Public Works. The City has three phases of restrictions, with Phase 1 being voluntary and Phases 2 and 3 being mandatory. Residents are notified of restrictions via the City newsletter, social media, press releases, and Taneytown Connect. [Contact the City](#) for specifics on when water restrictions might be imposed, what they are, and current status.

Union Bridge: The Mayor and the Councilman who oversees the water system determine when water restrictions go into effect. These measures are voluntary and include no watering of lawns or washing cars, houses, or sidewalks. Residents are notified of restrictions via the Town newsletter and [website](#), as well as public notices around town.

Westminster: The City's [Drought Management Plan](#) identifies what the water restrictions are, when they are imposed, and why. Check the City's [website](#), social media, drought hotline, etc. for restrictions.

Common Restrictions include, but are not limited to, outdoor burning and outdoor water use, such as filling swimming pools, washing cars, sprinklers and lawn/landscape watering, and reducing indoor usage by 10%.



Conservation Measures to Use at Home



Homeowners can save as much as \$140 dollars per year on their water bills when they replace toilets in their homes with high-efficiency toilets like low flush toilets. This savings can add up to about \$2,900 during the toilets' lifespan.

Fix Leaks Promptly:

Regularly check faucets, pipes, and toilets for leaks and repair them promptly. A dripping faucet or silent toilet leak can waste a significant amount of water over time (and run up your water bill if you're served by public water).

Insulate Pipes:

Insulate hot water pipes to reduce the time it takes for hot water to reach the faucet.



Install Water-Efficient Fixtures:

Replace older, inefficient faucets and showerheads with WaterSense-labeled products that are designed to use less water without compromising performance. This can reduce water used for flushing toilets by 20-60%, or ~13,000 gallons of water per year for your home, per the EPA.

Install On-Demand Hot Water Systems:

Consider replacing a traditional water heater with an efficient tankless on-demand hot water system to avoid running water that you're not using while waiting for it to get hot.



Upgrade to High-Efficiency Appliances:

Consider replacing old appliances, such as washing machines and dishwashers, with high-efficiency models that use less water per cycle. Look for appliances with the Energy Star label and products with the HE symbol on them.

Practice Smart Water Use When Doing Laundry:

Run the washing machine with a full load of laundry.

Practice Smart Water Use When Washing Dishes:

Scrape, rather than rinse, dishes before loading into the dishwasher to avoid running the water. Run the dishwasher with a full load of dishes. Don't run the water constantly while handwashing dishes. Use basins to wash and rinse dishes.

Compost Food Waste:

Add food wastes to your compost pile instead of using the garbage disposal.

Collect and Reuse Water:

Use large containers to capture running water that isn't being used (such as when you're waiting for the water to get hot), then use that water for plants. If it's not used, you can use it for cooking. Wash dishes in a dish basin, then use the water for certain outdoor plants.

Be Mindful of Running Water:

Turn off the tap when brushing teeth, shaving, or shampooing.

Educate Family Members:

Raise awareness by having discussions regarding the importance of water conservation.



Fix a Leak | US EPA

According to the US EPA, the average household's leaks can account for **nearly 10,000 gallons** of water wasted every year, and 10 percent of homes have leaks that waste 90 gallons or more per day. Common types of leaks found in the home are worn toilet flappers, dripping faucets, and other leaking valves.

<https://bit.ly/4aDy1hu>

Check this amount against your water rates to see how much 10,000 gallons lost to leaks could cost YOU!

Conservation Measures to Use in the Yard

Note: If you live in a community with a homeowners' association, check your bylaws for what is allowed or needs approval.

Watering Practices:

If you must water the garden or grass, do it during the early morning or late evening to reduce evaporation. Adjust sprinklers to avoid watering sidewalks, driveways, or other non-landscaped areas.

Efficient Irrigation:

Use drip irrigation or soaker hoses to deliver water directly to the root zone of plants, minimizing water loss through evaporation and runoff.

Rainwater Harvesting:

Install rain barrels or cisterns to collect rainwater from rooftops for later use in watering plants and gardens. Carroll County Bureau of Solid Waste offers [rain barrels for sale](#) each spring for pickup in April.

Mulching:

Applying mulch around plants and in garden beds helps retain soil moisture, reduce evaporation, and suppress weed growth.

Water-Saving Landscaping Features:

Reduce the impervious surfaces by incorporating features such as permeable paving, gravel pathways, and rock gardens to reduce runoff, thereby reducing the amount of irrigation needed.

Smart Planting and Grouping:

Group plants with similar water needs together to create efficient irrigation zones. Choose drought-resistant and native plants that require less water once established. Remove weeds in your garden that compete with plants for water and nutrients.

Lawn Care Practices:

Set lawnmower blades higher to shade the soil and reduce evaporation. Leave grass clippings on the lawn to help retain moisture and provide nutrients.

Regular Maintenance:

Monitor for leaks in irrigation systems and repair them promptly to prevent water waste. Sweep driveways, sidewalks, and steps rather than hosing off.

When voluntary water restrictions are in place, choose to reduce or limit further...

Lawns and Landscaping: Reduce or eliminate watering of lawns and landscaping. Use water collected from other uses indoors or water in rain barrels to water outdoor plants.

Sprinklers and Watering Devices: Reduce use of sprinklers and other automatic watering devices.

Washing Paved Surfaces: Don't wash paved surfaces, such as streets, roads, sidewalks, driveways, garages, parking areas, tennis courts, and patios. Use a broom instead.

Ornamental Features: Reduce use of water for ornamental fountains, artificial waterfalls, misting machines, and reflecting pools unless the system recycles its water.

Washing Vehicles: Reduce use of water for washing or cleaning of mobile equipment, including automobiles, trucks, trailers, and boats. Take vehicles to a car wash that recycles its water.



Links to Other Resources for Residents

- ◆ **MDE—"Water Conservation"**
<https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/water/waterconservation/pages/index.aspx>
- ◆ **MDE—"Tips for Inside the Home"**
<https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/water/waterconservation/pages/athome.aspx>
- ◆ **MDE—"Level One Mandatory Water Use Restrictions"**
<https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/water/droughtinformation/pages/restrictions.aspx>
- ◆ **EPA—"The Water-Sense Label"**
<https://www.epa.gov/watersense/watersense-label>
- ◆ **EPA—"Residential Toilets"**
<https://www.epa.gov/watersense/residential-toilets#:~:text=available%20in%20PDF,-.WaterSense%20Savings,for%20your%20home%20every%20year!>
- ◆ **EPA—"Energy Star"**
<https://www.energystar.gov/>
- ◆ **University of Maryland Extension—"Conserve Water in Your Landscape"**
<https://extension.umd.edu/resource/conservewateryourlandscape/>
- ◆ **American Water Works Association—"Water Conservation"**
<https://www.awwa.org/Resources-Tools/Resource-Topics/Water-Conservation>
- ◆ **Natural Resources Defense Council—"9 Tricks That Save Tons of Water"**
https://www.nrdc.org/stories/9-tricks-save-tons-water?gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCCQiAtaOtBhCwARiAN_x-3IDHHvq0u44tXzrIIMgS9Vio-ejLsXczAXYngrlBwgC787bzvdpF4AaAtGyEALw_wcB
- ◆ **Home Water Works—"Water Saving Tips for Home"**
<https://home-water-works.org/water-conservation-tips/home>
- ◆ **Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection—"Tips for Conserving Water"**
<https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Water/Water-Quantity/Tips-for-Conserving-Water>
- ◆ **Carroll County News Release—"MDE Declares Drought Watch for Carroll County" (July 2023)**
<https://www.carrollcountymd.gov/residents/county-news/carroll-county-government-news-release-2023-archive/mde-declares-drought-watch-for-carroll-county-residents-asked-to-serve-water/>



- ◆ **MDE News Release—"MDE Issues Drought Warning for Portions of State" (Sept 2023)**
<https://news.maryland.gov/mde/2023/09/20/maryland-department-of-environment-issues-drought-warning-for-portions-of-state/>
- ◆ **The 71 Percent—"Soil's Role in Water Conservation"**
<https://www.the71percent.org/soils-role-in-water-conservation/>



These tips and resources apply to homes served by public water systems, but they also apply to those with private wells!

Fun Fact: Roughly half (34,100 out of 67,284 or 50.7%) of the households in the county use private wells!

Carroll County Municipal Water Systems

- ◆ **Freedom/Sykesville**
<https://www.carrollcountymd.gov/government/directory/public-works/utilities/>
- ◆ **Hampstead**
<https://hampsteadmd.gov/water>
- ◆ **Manchester**
<https://manchestermd.gov/water-restrictions/>
- ◆ **Mount Airy**
<https://www.mountairymd.gov/152/Water-Sewer>
- ◆ **New Windsor**
<https://newwindsormd.gov/utilities/>
- ◆ **Taneytown**
https://www.taneytownmd.gov/departments/public_works/public_water_service.php
- ◆ **Union Bridge**
<https://www.townofub.org/town-services>
- ◆ **Westminster**
<https://www.westminstermd.gov/171/Water-Treatment>



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