

The Whys and Hows of Water Conservation

Why Water Conservation?

The lower Virginia Peninsula is surrounded by water and gets an average of 44 inches of rain a year. So why conserve water?

The water around us and in our rivers is salty, so we must go elsewhere for fresh water. Our area is also prone to drought. By conserving during dry, hot periods, we extend the supplies we have, making them last longer while we wait for needed rain.

Using water wisely helps preserve a limited and finite resource. It also helps utilities use less chemicals to treat the water, less energy to deliver the water, and it reduces wastewater.

Finally, conserving water saves you money on both your water and wastewater bills.



The salty water in the rivers and bay that surround the lower Virginia Peninsula is unfit to drink.

A screenshot of a web form titled "Calculate Your Water Savings". The form has several input fields and dropdown menus. The first field is "Enter the number of households:" with the value "1" entered. Below it is "How many people live in each household?" with a "Choose One" dropdown. There are two checkboxes: "Faucets" and "Toilets". Below these are two more "Choose One" dropdowns: "How will the water be heated?" and "When were the existing toilets installed?". At the bottom is "Enter the length of time to calculate savings:" with a "Choose One" dropdown. There are also some small icons and a "Frame Color" label on the right side.

SAVE MONEY

Every time you use tap water, you are charged by two or three agencies: Newport News Waterworks (to treat and deliver the tap water), the Hampton Roads Sanitation District (to treat the wastewater), and Public Works Departments in Newport News or Hampton, to maintain local sewer lines. James City County charges its residents for sewer line maintenance based on water use. York County and Poquoson bill you separately and charge flat sewer user fees unrelated to actual water use.

When you add these charges together, the cost of using water can run \$8 or more per hundred cubic feet, or hcf. (Waterworks bills in units of hcf. One hcf equals 748 gallons).

Save money. Use these water conservation tips and the water savings calculator on our web site at: www.nnva.gov/waterworks. The calculator will estimate how much water you can save by installing low flow toilets and faucets in your home, based on current Waterworks, Public Works and HRSD rates.

SAVING WATER INDOORS

Fix leaks

- A leaking toilet can waste 600 gallons of water a month! Check toilets monthly by dropping a little food coloring in the tank; if the color shows in the bowl before you flush, you have a leak.
- A leaking faucet can waste 140 gallons per week.

Install Low-Flow Fixtures

- Replacing toilets installed prior to 1992 can save as much as 10,000–15,000 gallons of water per year! To calculate how much water and money you can save with low-flow toilets and faucets, go to www.nnva.gov/waterworks
- Keeping showers under 5 minutes helps save up to 1,000 gallons a week.

Laundry

- Washing only full loads can save about 600 gallons of water per month.
- A high-efficiency front-loading clothes washer uses 40% less water than top-loading clothes washers.

SAVING WATER OUTDOORS

Plant smart

- Prepare soil for better water absorption.
- Plant drought tolerant plants and save up to 500 gallons of water per year per plant.
- Mulch around plants to hold in moisture.
- Go to www.askHRGREEN.org to download our "Water-Wise Landscaping & Watering Guide"

Irrigation

- Most rain barrel store 55 gallons at a time, fill quickly with an inch of rain, and can save 1,500 gallons or more per season.
- Water before 10 a.m. or after 4 p.m. to reduce evaporation.
- Adjust your sprinkler to water the lawn and landscaping, not the driveway or street.
- Don't use a sprinkler when it's windy.
- Use drip irrigation to water close to plant roots.

Outdoor uses

- Use a hose nozzle while washing the car, rather than letting the water run, and save 100 gallons per wash.
- Use a broom or blower to clean the driveway instead of your water hose and save 80 gallons of water each time.

Newport News Waterworks

is a regional public water utility serving Hampton, Newport News, Poquoson, York County, and part of James City County.



Customer Services:

Many of our convenient services can be found online at www.nnva.gov/waterworks

Contact us by Phone:

Customer Service	(757) 926-1000
Customer Service TDD	(757) 926-1100
Emergency (after hours)	(757) 234-4800
Emergency TDD	(757) 234-4933

Please note that our busiest call days are Monday and Friday, and our busiest call times are from noon to 2:00 pm every day.

Online Information:

wvcustservice@nngov.com (email)
www.nnva.gov/waterworks (web site)
www.facebook.com/nnwaterworks (web site)

Visit our partner web sites:

www.askHRGREEN.org
www.epa.gov/watersense

