

The Bay Laurel Center Community Development District encourages and promotes year round water conservation measures. Recently, the Water Management District hydrologists have reported a rainfall deficit of 11-inches since the start of the dry season this last October. In fact, this is the driest dry season in the past 103 years. We want to take the time and remind our customers the importance of water conservation and provide some helpful tips on ways to conserve water indoors and outdoors. The Water Management District could implement increased watering restrictions if the drought continues which would limit irrigation to one day per week. Additional water conservation information is also available online at www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/conservation/.

Outdoor Water Savings

Check your irrigation system routinely to ensure it is working properly and was not damaged by lawn maintenance equipment.

- If you notice irrigation heads or drip emitters constantly discharging water, a solenoid valve may not be closing properly. A dark yellow ring around the irrigation head in turf grass is a good indicator.
- Perform a test on your rain sensor to ensure it is operating properly. The sensor should not be installed in an area that is blocked by roof overhangs, bushes or trees.
- To ensure you are not over watering use a rain gauge (Free at Customer Service) to determine how much you are applying during an irrigation cycle. Typical application should only be $\frac{1}{2}$ " to $\frac{3}{4}$ " of an inch.
- When making repairs to your irrigation system make sure to use water conservative fixtures to save water and money. The cheapest irrigation head is not always the best option and can lead to added cost in water use long term.
- Water lawns during the early morning or early evening hours — before 10 a.m. or after 4 p.m. — when temperature and wind speed are lowest. This reduces losses from evaporation and wind that can occur during the middle of the day. This also allows the water to seep into the ground to the grass and plant roots, promoting healthier plants with deep root systems.

Check your garden hose for leaks at its connection to the spigot.

- If it leaks while you run your hose, replace the nylon or rubber hose washer and ensure a tight connection to the spigot using pipe tape and a wrench.
- Don't forget to shut off your water hose when done using.

Use a broom or leaf blower instead of a water hose to clean driveways and sidewalks.

- This is a big water waster in our communities.

Indoor Water Savings

If you have a water softener, ensure your settings are correct to reduce unnecessary backwash cycles and save water.

- Most water softeners perform backwash cycles automatically to regenerate the exchange media. The backwash system can fail in the open position or backwash more frequently than needed causing excessive water use. Visually inspect the system while performing a backwash cycle to ensure proper operation.
- With all mechanical equipment routine preventative maintenance is required to ensure proper continued operation.

Identify toilet leaks by placing a couple drops of food coloring or dye tablets (Free at Customer Service) in the toilet tank. If any color shows up in the bowl after 10 minutes, you have a leak.

- A common reason why toilets will leak is because of an old or worn-out toilet flapper (also known as a valve seal). Flappers are inexpensive rubber parts that can decay over time. Replacing them can be a quick and easy fix for your water woes.

Install aerators with flow restrictors on the kitchen and bathroom faucets.

- Because the aerator limits the water flow through the faucet, water use is reduced as compared to the same flow without an aerator. In the case of hot water, because less water is used, less heat energy is used.

Install water saving showerheads and limit showers to five minutes.

- Showering is one of the leading ways we use water in the home, accounting for nearly 17 percent of residential indoor water use. By retrofitting your shower with a WaterSense labeled showerhead, you can save a considerable amount of water.

Turn off the water while brushing your teeth and shaving.

- Turning off the water between wetting your toothbrush and rinsing your mouth is one of the simplest and most effective ways to save water.

Rinse fruit and vegetables in a bowl of water instead of under running water.

Only wash full loads of dishes and laundry.

- Washers use about the same amount of water regardless of the size of the load and by reducing the number of cycles you can significantly save water, energy and money.
- If the load size can be set make sure to select the minimum amount of water required for each load.

