

GREEN GUARDIANS

Using and Conserving Water

You've all read and heard about the extensive drought situation in the western U.S. But, the difficulties with drought in Colorado or California affect every one of us. Pollution or tainting of municipal water supplies has been reported extensively in Michigan, as well as reports of industrial pollution of drinking water in every state. It's a good time to be thinking of how "I" can be a good steward of this most important resource. The epa.gov website also has fun water-wise activities for kids ...and parents too! Help your children and grandchildren understand the importance of wise use of water.

Ways we can help save water:

In the bathroom - over half of all home use of water occurs in the bathroom.

- Look for WaterSense products if you want to replace a shower head, or are doing a renovation.
- Showers use less water than baths, as long as you are paying attention and not singing your favorite tune. Even more saving: turn water off to lather up or wash hair, then back on.
- Turn off the water when you are brushing teeth...fill a cup and rinse with that.
- When heating water at the tap, let it run slowly. Running for 5 minutes at full blast takes as much energy as letting a 60-watt light bulb run for 14 hours.

In the kitchen -

- Use a basin in the sink if hand washing. Wash several dishes and rinse all at once. It doesn't need to be a flood; use a lower volume setting. It's not true that using a dishwasher saves water if you like to hand wash and are thoughtful about it. Only use a dishwasher when it is full.
- Add food waste to a compost pile rather than running it down the sink.
- Keep a pitcher of drinking water in the refrigerator rather than running water at the sink.
- If you thaw food under running water...think ahead and thaw in the refrigerator overnight.

Outside -

- Plant native plants which won't need much additional water once established.
- Water by hand rather than using sprinklers or timed irrigation systems. Plants do much better if watered deeply and less frequently. If you have an irrigation system, make sure it is on a reasonable timer mechanism.
- Don't water grass. It will die back in drought conditions, but will return.
- Sweep your walk or steps rather than hosing them off. Good exercise too!

It also takes water to provide electricity...an entirely different topic. Keep energy use in mind too! **Green Guardians** wants to help **you** conserve our God-given resources.