



## Water Conservation: Top 10 List of Tips to Conserve Water and Save Money

It is up to us as good stewards to take consistent, responsible steps to reduce our water usage and conserve water. To address the vital issue of water conservation, BOMA-Atlanta has compiled a list of 10 helpful steps for property and facility managers to help you conserve water and make a positive impact.

- 1. Detect and Repair Leaks.** Before you begin implementing extensive water conservation measures, conduct a maintenance review to make sure that your building is leak-free. Even small leaks can cause a loss of up to 7 gallons of water a day per toilet, and extensive toilet leaks can lead to a loss of more than 100 gallons per day. Toilet, faucet and showerhead leaks can quickly be repaired, often with the replacement of a cheap gasket or flapper valve.
- 2. Install Aerators.** One of the fastest and easiest ways to reduce water is to install low-flow aerators. Screw-on aerators for bathroom faucets can be purchased for around \$2 and can be installed with minimum effort for maximum conservation, saving from half a gallon of water per faucet to more than 4 gallons per faucet on a given day.
- 3. Insert Water Displacement Devices.** If you're not ready to install low-flow toilets, consider using displacement devices such as toilet inserts for large toilet tanks. These devices take up toilet tank space, thereby limiting the amount of water used. They can be purchased for under \$2 and can conserve up to 3 gallons of water per day.
- 4. Monitor Activities with Sensors.** Sensor monitoring continues to grow, including the use of cooling tower sensors and motion-sensor faucets for water conservation. The *Handbook for Water Use and Conservation* postulates that using soil moisture sensors/probes and rain sensors can reduce outdoor water use by up to 10 percent. For more information about the benefits of sensor use, contact your landscaper and building engineer.
- 5. Implement "Dry" Cleaning Methods.** Using a broom, squeegee or dry vacuum cleaner for "dry" instead of "wet" cleaning can save gallons of water. By switching from wet to steam cleaning, mopping floors instead of hosing them, and sweeping parking and sidewalk areas, you can save up to 80 gallons of water per activity.
- 6. Consider Your Cooling Tower.** Water conservation in buildings increasingly involves water cooling towers. Adjust your tower float valve assemblies and cooling tower condensers for less bleed-off, and collect the run-off HVAC water to use in your landscaping. Whatever your recycling method, be sure to evaluate your cooling tower as part of your water conservation efforts. Doing so can save gallons of water each day.
- 7. Reduce Water Pressure.** Reducing water pressure is being floated as a long-term water conservation method. High water pressure can strain tubing and valves and can cause leaks. Pressure reducing valves (PRVs) reduce the amount of water that is lost from water main breaks and pipe leaks, and reduce the amount of water being used. Check with your building engineers to see if your building's PRVs can be used more effectively.
- 8. Xeriscape Your Outdoor Areas.** Xeriscaping is a seven-step comprehensive process that can reduce outdoor water use by as much as 50 percent. A popular method in other drought-ridden states, Xeriscaping effectively combines planting and design, soil analysis and improvements, plant selection, turfgrass management, irrigation, mulches and maintenance. To learn more about Xeriscaping, download a Xeriscape guide from the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension's Web site (<http://pubs.caes.uga.edu/caespubs/pubcd/B1073.htm>) or contact your landscaper.
- 9. Conserve Energy.** Using less energy can actually conserve water. Volumes of water are needed to produce the energy that powers your buildings. The less energy you use, the more water you conserve. By turning off unneeded lights, using energy-efficient lighting fixtures and restricting HVAC use during the weekend, you can save gallons of water.
- 10. Communicate, Communicate, Communicate.** Consistent communication is one of the best—and easiest—water conservation strategies. Remind your tenants, your vendors and yourself about the importance of water conservation with daily, weekly or monthly e-mails, bulletin board postings or other messages to communicate the impact of conservation. You will see your communication pay off.



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