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HOW TO REDUCE WATER CONSUMPTION IN THE HOME

Hotter months mean not just a rise in temperature, but the water bill as well. Though everyone is ecstatic for warmer weather, beautiful blooms and soft breezes, no one is excited to see their money circling the drain. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), transitioning from cool to warm weather can rise the average daily water usage for a household from 320 gallons a day to 1,000. Fortunately, there are many ways to conserve water and your cash.

Laundry Room

The laundry room isn't just a place where we spend a significant portion of our time, but our money as well. The EPA reports that the average U.S. family uses 10,000 gallons of water a year on laundry, or 17 percent of a household's water usage. To lesson the load, switch to an Energy Star certified washer, a certification given by the EPA for appliances that meet their energy-efficient standards. Many Energy Star certified washers are front loaded, which can reduce the yearly use of laundry water up to 6,000 gallons.

Combination washer and dryers are also a great option. These appliances use a condensing system to dry clothes instead of a typical dryer which uses a vent. An Energy



Star Report found the potentially 20-25 percent of heat-energy for a dryer is lost through the dryer vent. Therefore, switching to a combination washer and dryer could save on electric as well as water.

Other ways to save water include hand washing and leaving items to dry on a heated towel rack. Hand washing means smaller and fewer loads of laundry, and a heated rack ensures your items will dry quickly. As a bonus, you'll incur further savings using a heated towel rack as they only use the energy equivalent to a few light bulbs. Freestanding racks are a great option for drying clothes as they're portable and easy to use.

Bathroom

Bathrooms are the largest use of water in the home, using more than 50 percent of all indoor water. Fortunately, there are many ways to reduce water usage in the bathroom. Installing WaterSense appliances, a label given by the EPA for water-efficient products,



can drastically reduce water consumption without even trying. The average family, for example, can save 13,000 gallons of water and \$130 in water costs per year by replacing all old, inefficient toilets in their home with WaterSense labeled models.

Additionally, heated towel racks, just as they do in the laundry room, can reduce laundry loads by prolonging the life of towels in the bathroom. Not only that, heated racks also help reduce mold and mildew in linens and the air, a common problem in damp spaces like a bathroom. For further savings, install a timer on a rack to ensure you're only using energy when you need or want it.

Of course, creating positive habits throughout the home will ensure the best use of water. These include simple actions like turning off the faucet when brushing your teeth, taking short showers, irrigating the lawn at night and fixing any leaks.

For more information on how to save water this spring and summer, visit www.epa.org/watersense

Jeeves

