

Install a Low-Flow Showerhead and Faucet Aerators



Task: Install at least one low-flow showerhead and change faucet aerators as needed.

The typical household in the developed world uses upwards of 260 gallons of water per day . The good news is that by making a few quick changes, spending as little as \$30 and replacing faucets and showers with low-flow fixtures can cut out about 45 of those gallons each day (that's about 18%); if you splurge on a [low-flow toilet](#), you're down to almost half the water, saving lots of precious H2O but also saving you money on your water and electricity/gas bill (depending on how your water is heated).
(<http://www.treehugger.com/files/2007/04/earth-day-save-water-shower.php>)

Advanced: If you have already accomplished this, save more water by 1) installing low-flush toilets, and/or 2) installing a rainbarrel.

Tips for choosing and installing a low-flow shower head:

- To judge your present showerhead's flow rate, hold a gallon container under the head and clock the time it takes to fill it. If it fills up in 15 seconds, the flow rate is about 4 gallons per minute (gpm). If it's full in 10 seconds, the flow rate is closer to 6 gpm. With a low-flow head, it should take 24 seconds or more. (<http://www.hometips.com/buying-guides/showerheads-low-flow.html>)
- For a review of products, visit this site:
<http://www.treehugger.com/files/2007/04/earth-day-save-water-shower.php>

Faucets (http://www.energysavers.gov/your_home/water_heating/index.cfm/mytopic=13050)

- The aerator—the screw-on tip of the faucet—ultimately determines the maximum flow rate of a faucet. Typically, new kitchen faucets come equipped with aerators that restrict flow rates to 2.2 gpm, while new bathroom faucets have ones that restrict flow rates from 1.5 to 0.5 gpm.
- Aerators are inexpensive to replace and they can be one of the most cost-effective water conservation measures. For maximum water efficiency, purchase aerators that have flow rates of no more than 1.0 gpm. Some aerators even come with shut-off valves that allow you to stop the flow of water without affecting the temperature. When replacing an aerator, bring the one you're replacing to the store with you to ensure a proper fit.

What else you can do:

- Limit shower time to 5 minutes.
- Minimize the time you let the water run.
- Find ways to use water that runs while you're waiting for it to get hot or cold. (Examples: use a bucket in the shower to collect water while waiting for it to warm up. Use it to flush toilets, water plants, wash floors, soak laundry, etc.)
- See http://www.eartheasy.com/live_water_saving.htm for more water-saving ideas. There is even a showerhead that will slow water flow to a trickle when it reaches 95 degrees, minimizing waste (when you're ready to use the water you simply flick a switch to resume water flow).

What you should know:

- There is a worsening trend in water supply nationwide: In 1990, 30 states in the US reported 'water-stress' conditions. In 2000, the number of states reporting water-stress rose to 40. In 2009, the number rose to 45. (http://www.eartheasy.com/live_water_saving.htm)
- Saving water also saves electricity. It takes energy to pump water from its source to a water treatment plant, it takes energy to make it potable, and it takes energy to get it to your house.

REDUCE YOUR ENERGY AND WATER CONSUMPTION:

Losing only 1 minute of hot water per shower can mean an additional \$75 in utility bills and 2,700 gallons of water wasted per year (for a family of three).

-<http://eartheasy.com/water-conservation/indoor/evolve-roadrunner-showerhead-with-showerstart-1-5-gpm>