

The Highlands Ranch Guide to Home Water Management

Water Check and Tips

Check your toilets (toilet leaks are often silent). Once a year, check for toilet leaks. Remove the toilet tank cover and place **dye tablets** or drip 10 drops of food coloring into the tank. After 30 minutes, check for color in the toilet bowl (flush as soon as test is done since food coloring may stain tank). If you see any color, your toilet has a leak and should be repaired immediately. Also, remember to check your flapper periodically to make sure it fits tightly.

Watch your time in the shower. A typical shower lasts about eight minutes and uses about 17 gallons of water. An efficient shower lasts four to five minutes and uses 7.5 gallons. Use the **flow measuring bag** to see how much water your shower head uses. Then use the **Shower Coach** as a reminder to take a shorter shower. Please contact Centennial Water for a water conservation kit containing these items.

Save water in the kitchen and laundry room. Run only full loads in the dishwasher or washing machine. Automatic dishwashers use about 12 gallons and washing machines use 40 or more gallons of water a load. When washing dishes by hand, don't keep the water running. A basin of wash water and one of rinse water will do the job just as well.

Need a cold drink of water? Try storing a jug in the refrigerator rather than running water until it cools down.

No one knows your water usage like you and your family. Inventory your water use habits around the home. Ask your family members these questions, and then fill out the chart below.

- **Is your dishwasher full before you start it?**
- **Do you wash only full loads of clothes?**
- **Do you spend less than 10 minutes in the shower?**
- **Do you turn off the water while brushing your teeth or shaving?**

Water Use Habits	Person 1		Person 2		Person 3		Person 4	
Shower time:								
Is water off when shaving or brushing teeth?	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Is dishwasher full?	Yes		No					
Is clothes washer full?	Yes		No					
Write down ways your family can save water:								

Meter Check

Leaks happen, even to the most water wise family. The best way to determine water use is to read your water meter. Using the meter, you can calculate daily use, if there is a leak, or how much water is used by different appliances. High water usage may be caused by leaks, broken pipes, plumbing fixtures, consumption habits, irrigation scheduling, appliance problems or valve failure.

How to check for leaks with your water meter:

- Turn off all taps and appliances that use water (humidifiers, ice makers) in your home.
- Record the meter's reading before and after one hour's time.
- Visually check all water sources in your home for leaks: toilets, taps, humidifiers, and water softeners.

To learn how much water a certain activity, appliance or fixture uses, turn off all other taps, then read the meter before the activity, and just after the activity is complete.

Leak Check

What to do when you find a leak.

Hiring a plumber is the best solution, particularly if you are not comfortable making repairs. You can also get repair tips at a hardware store or read a how-to book or magazine with detailed instructions. *Fill out this chart to help you locate water waste and fix the problem.*

Fixture	Leak?		Fixed?	Replaced?
	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Toilets				
Faucets				
Showerheads				
Irrigation systems				
Hose bib				
Pool/Spa				



Outdoor Check

Sprinkler systems can be very inefficient unless closely monitored. If not properly designed or maintained, they can waste water.

Waste also occurs if timers are not adjusted during the season for weather conditions. Other factors include breaks, leaks, or simply over-watering.

It is recommended that you regularly check for leaks. If you are not certain about doing your own repairs, call a landscape contractor or an irrigation specialist.

Sprinkler System Checklist

- Turn on lawn sprinklers and observe spray patterns from the nozzles. Note any leaks, tilted, broken, or clogged heads (make sure they are spraying your yard).
- Turn on drip and bubbler valves and observe water flow and wetting patterns.
- Regularly check and maintain your sprinkler system. A heavy rain means you don't have to water at all. Teach the family how to turn off an automatic sprinkler system in case of a storm during the watering cycle.
- Use your water meter to monitor how much irrigation water you use. See the Meter Check portion of this guide for instructions.

Scheduling Your Controller

Know how to adjust your controller. Change watering schedules with the seasons, rain, or plant maturity. The more often you change your schedule, the more water you can save.

Using the **Outdoor Watering Guidebook** and the **rain gauge**, perform a catch can test and follow the instructions printed in the guide. Then use the rain gauge to check the amount of rainfall and adjust your watering time.



62 W. Plaza Dr.
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HOME WATER MANAGEMENT



Why Should You Conserve Water?

**You pay for what you use,
so why not use less and save?**

Conserving water helps ensure that Highlands Ranch has a reliable and cost-effective water supply for the future.

This packet is aimed at helping you save water and money without making big changes or sacrifices. Use these tools to learn more about your family's water use and use the tips to learn how to better conserve water.

With these tools, we hope you find it easy to conserve. For more information about saving water in your home, please visit www.highlandsranch.org or call 303-791-0430.

Contact Us



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