

Don't Wash Money Down the Drain

"We never know the worth of water till the well is dry." —Thomas Fuller, 1732

On average, Americans use 40 billion gallons of water every day. Around the house, up to 70% of that is used on landscapes. Saving water outside the home is as important as saving water inside the home. Follow these tips to save this summer.

- **Garden hose nozzles.** The spray from a garden hose nozzle can be directed to the plants or shrubs that need more water. When you wash your car, use a hose nozzle to turn off the water and save more than 100 gallons.
- **Brooms.** Clean your driveway or sidewalk between rain showers with a broom. Sweep the dirt and spread it over your lawn or put it in the garbage to keep it from entering storm sewer catch basins.
- **Sprinkler timers.** A sprinkler timer can be set to shut off your sprinkler after a set period.
- **Screwdriver.** Use a long screwdriver as a soil probe to test soil moisture. If you can push it easily into your lawn for several inches, don't water. Proper lawn watering can save thousands of dollars annually.
- **Sprinklers.** Use sprinklers that throw big drops of water close to the ground. Smaller drops and mist often evaporate before they hit the ground.
- **Rain gauge.** Let Mother Nature water for you. A rain gauge is a low-cost, reliable device that measures the water your lawn gets from rainfall. If you receive an inch or more within a week, skip your next watering.
- **Shut-off device.** Nothing wastes water like sprinklers in the rain. Install a rain shut-off device on your automatic sprinklers to eliminate unnecessary watering.
- **Soil aerator.** This inexpensive tool punches holes in your lawn about 6 inches apart. Water reaches the roots rather than running off the surface.
- **Rain barrels.** Put the water from your downspout to good use by catching it in a mosquito-proof rain barrel. Plants love rainwater because it doesn't contain chlorine and is warmer than tap water. Plus, using rainwater can help you save water and money on your water bill.
- **Gutter diverters.** A gutter diverter is designed to work with a rain gutter downspout. It has a switch that diverts the water to the landscape or to the rain barrel.
- **Rain chains.** Rain chains replace a downspout, and channel water into a specific location, such as a basin or a rain barrel. They are pleasing to look at and slow down water, which reduces splashing and erosion.
- **Wind.** Don't water your lawn on windy days. Sidewalks and driveways don't need water.
- **Compost.** Use the garbage disposal sparingly. Compost fruit and vegetable scraps instead and save gallons from disposal use.
- **Hose bibs.** Hose bibs are the faucets on the outside of your home where you connect your garden hoses. Don't forget to check outdoor faucets, pipes and hoses for leaks.
- **Hose washers.** Replacing a hose washer often can fix your leaking garden-hose connection.
- **Toilet flappers.** Flappers deteriorate, so they need to be checked every year to make sure they fit tightly over the flush tube. Put food coloring in your toilet tank. If it seeps into the toilet bowl, you have a leak. It is easy to fix, and can save more than 600 gallons a month.
- **Faucets.** Grab a wrench and fix that leaky faucet. It's simple, inexpensive and can save 140 gallons a week. ■

Check out www.wateruseitwisely.com for more water conservation tips.

Equipment and Power Lines: A Deadly Combination

Overhead power lines are not insulated. Contact with the lines can be deadly. Accidents can be prevented with a few safety steps.

- ▶ Survey your work site and familiarize yourself with the location of all power lines. Look up!
- ▶ Store irrigation equipment and pipes at least 100 feet from power lines.
- ▶ When moving irrigation pipes, keep them horizontal. Never lift them in the air toward power lines.
- ▶ Use a safe route when transporting irrigation equipment between storage areas and fields.
- ▶ Adjust grain augers and other equipment to their lowest position before moving.
- ▶ When moving equipment, have someone watch to ensure contact with the lines does not occur.
- ▶ If you hit a power line with equipment, stay inside the equipment where you will be safe from shock. Direct someone to call Klickitat PUD at 800-548-8357 to shut off the power. If you have to get out of the equipment due to another danger, jump free rather than stepping off.