

Water and Energy Conservation



Atlanta Plumbing Plus wants to encourage everyone to do everything they can to conserve our limited fresh water supplies and reduce energy costs. Below are directions on how to conserve our precious supply of drinking water, and save money!

However, please remember that Safety is Your Responsibility. Atlanta Plumbing Plus has made every effort to be complete and accurate in the recommendations in this Conservation Aid. However, Atlanta Plumbing Plus does not assume any responsibility or liability for damages or losses suffered, sustained, or incurred in the course of your using the recommendations in this Conservation Aid. Furthermore, improper use of tools or incorrectly following recommendations can lead to serious and permanent injury or even death. Do not attempt to use any of the recommendations in the Conservation Aid unless you:

- 1.) Fully understand that recommendation
- 2.) All guards and safety precautions are in place
- 3) You have read and will follow all manufacturers' instructions and will check and observe all safety precautions.

If you don't feel comfortable performing these activities yourself and you decide you need a plumber, make sure you hire a Licensed Plumber who carries both Workman's Compensation and General Liability Insurance. Many people who call themselves plumbers have not met the State requirements for training and experience and have not passed the rigorous State Licensing test. Ask to see your plumber's license before he starts the work. Or, call Atlanta Plumbing Plus: All our plumbers meet these requirements.

Atlanta Plumbing Plus wants to encourage everyone to do everything they can to conserve our limited fresh water supplies and reduce energy costs. The information below covers conservation practices for:

- Water Heaters
- Faucets
- Showers
- Toilets
- Water Lines

Water Heaters:

Your water heater can be a major source of energy and water loss. It is important that you check it at least once every 6 months. ***(See the link to Plumbing Tips and Tricks on our web page for more detailed instructions on how to check and maintain your water heater.)***

- ❖ Check the setting on the water heater thermostat. For every 10 degrees the temperature is lowered, you will reduce energy usage by 3 – 5%. Your thermostat should be set at 120°F for the best compromise between performance and conservation.
- ❖ If you are going to be away from home for more than a day or two, set your water heater to the vacation setting. If yours is an older water heater that does not have a vacation setting, then shut off the gas to the heater. If you do not feel comfortable re-lighting the heater when you return, call Atlanta Plumbing Plus.
- ❖ **Installing a fiberglass insulation jacket around your water heater and pipes can also save energy.**

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- ❖ **Rumbling sounds from a water heater are an indication that sediment has built up on the bottom of the tank. What you are hearing is water that is trapped in the sediment and is boiling. This is an indication that the water heater is not operating efficiently and that the sediment needs to be flushed out of the water heater. Sediment in your water heater can also reduce its efficiency by preventing heat from transferring to the water in the tank; instead, this heat is lost through the flue pipe. Sediment can also cause the tank to corrode, which shortens the life of the water heater. Many newer models of water heaters have a feature that prohibits the buildup of sediment in the tank. If your heater is an older model and has a lot of buildup, it may be cost effective to replace the water heater.**

Tankless Water Heaters:

To save even more energy, you may want to consider replacing your older, traditional, storage-tank water heater with a new high-efficiency tankless water heater. The initial cost can be substantially higher than for a traditional water heater, but the energy savings over time are considerable. A tankless water heater uses 20% to 30% less energy than a traditional water heater, and a tankless water heater will last twice as long as traditional water heater. Also, you may be able to reduce the initial cost of a tankless heater by taking advantage of manufacturer's rebates and Government Tax Credits.

Recirculating Pumps:

In many of Atlanta's larger homes the water heater is so far away from some of the bathrooms in the home that you may have to run the water in the bathroom for 2 – 5 minutes before it gets hot. This wastes 2.4 gallons of water a minute. By having Atlanta Plumbing Plus install a recirculating pump with a timer, you can have hot water to that bathroom faucet in 10 seconds or less without wasting a drop of water.

Water Lines

Even a tiny crack in a water line can waste more than 250 gallons of water a day. Make sure you check your pipes at least once a year. *(See the link to **Plumbing Tips and Tricks on our web page for detailed instructions on how to check and maintain your water lines.**)*

As winter approaches, make sure all of the pipes in your basement, crawl space, and attic are properly insulated to protect them from freeze breaks and to reduce your energy bill.

Pressure Reducing Valves

One of the biggest causes of leaks in the home is high water pressure, which can cause toilets, faucets, and even your water heater to leak. You can buy a simple water pressure gauge at your local hardware store and test the water pressure at an outside faucet or hose bibb. If the water pressure is over 60 pounds per square inch (60 psi) contact Atlanta Plumbing Plus to install a pressure-reducing valve (PRV) to reduce the water pressure coming in to your home.

Shower Heads:

Replacing an old shower head can save up to 7.5 gallons of water per minute and -- with the newer shower head designs -- you will still get the same spray and water pressure you did before.

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Toilets:

When they are running properly toilets can use over 40% of the water used in your home. When parts are worn, that amount increases dramatically. Running toilets can waste as much water as a leaking water line. Installing a new flapper and fill valve every few years will keep your toilet running efficiently.

To encourage conservation, the federal government requires that new toilets use no more than 1.6 gallons per flush. If you have an old 3 or 4 gallon toilet, you can save a great deal of water by switching to one of these newer models.

Note: The first toilets that were manufactured to meet the 1.6 gallon standard did not flush well; but recently, many companies have started making toilets that force the water out of the holding tank much faster. While this can be noisy, the force of the water does clear the waste out of the bowl very well. If you have an older water-saving toilet that does not flush well, you can save water and ensure a clean flush by switching to one of these newer models that flush as little as 1.1 gallons.

Faucets:

A dripping faucet can waste as much as 15 gallons of water each day, or 450 gallons per month. Repairing the faucet can save water and reduce your water bill. It can also reduce your energy bills if your hot water faucet is leaking.