

# HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

## Using Water Wisely

(NAPSA)—Your daily water use may seem like a drop in the bucket, considering how much H<sub>2</sub>O is actually out there. However, experts say that you may be using more water than you think.

In fact, each American household uses more than 94,000 gallons of fresh water each year, enough to fill 2½ Olympic-sized swimming pools. Also, the average American uses approximately 168 gallons of water a day.

Fortunately, there are simple ways to reduce excess water use, lower water bills and protect the environment—even in the warm weather months. Try these tips. They come from American Water, the largest water services provider in North America, serving 17 million people in the United States and Canada.

### Get Efficient

The American Water Works Association estimates Americans can cut their water use by 35 percent by installing more efficient water fixtures and regularly checking for leaks.

### Green Grass

Water your lawn only when it needs it. An easy way to tell if your lawn needs water is to walk across the grass. If you leave footprints, it's time to water.

If you do have to water, do so in the early morning. As much as 30 percent of water can be lost to evaporation if you water during midday. In addition, plan for a few deep-soaking waterings rather than frequent sprinklings, which can evaporate quickly. Setting your lawn mower one notch higher can reduce evaporation as well.

If you have sprinklers, check their heads and valves for leaks



**Efficient fixtures and checking for leaks could cut water use by 35 percent.**

and adjust the timer according to water needs and weather conditions. Also, make sure each sprinkler is covering lawn and shrubs, and not sidewalks and roads.

### Landscaping

Native and drought-tolerant plants may have lower water needs. A local nursery or state agriculture extension office can be a good information resource for planning a water-wise garden. Also, use mulch in the garden and around plants and shrubs to preserve moisture.

### Outdoor Maintenance

Control the flow from hoses with an automatic shutoff nozzle, and if you have a pool, use a cover to cut evaporation loss by as much as 90 percent. Use a broom instead of a hose to clean sidewalks and driveways and wash your car with soap and water from a bucket. Finally, disconnect hoses and make sure outdoor water is shut off during cold weather.

For more information, visit [www.amwater.com](http://www.amwater.com).