



Water \$aving Tips



Water is a valuable resource – particularly in Central Australia. Alice Springs Town Council is committed to conserving water, and offer residents the follow tips.

Water Saving Tips in the Home

Showers

Modern showerheads can produce a high-quality shower experience by only using 4 L/minute. What does your showerhead do? Switching to an efficient showerhead can save a lot of water. If yours is not that old it might have a flowrate of 9 L/minute. A really old one could have a flowrate of 20 L/minute.

For a family of four, each having one shower a day for five minutes going from 9 L/min to 4 L/min could save 36,500 litres a year! Cut your shower from five minutes to four minutes and you'll save even more at no cost. Pick a song while in shower to cut the length.

Short showers save water, as well as the energy costs associated with heating water.

New Taps and Fittings?

Changing your taps and other fittings? Choose your fittings wisely. Make your dollars count by choosing suitable fittings for the use. Efficient toilets, basins and showers can help you achieve your water saving goals and when you have to have an upgrade is the cheapest time to do it.

Choose water efficient products by looking at the Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards (WELS) label that is on taps, showers, toilets, dishwashers, washing machines and flow controllers.

Find out more here: <https://www.waterrating.gov.au/choose>

Washing Machines

Most new washing machines are water efficient. Even new top loading ones can have low water use. Switching to a water efficient washing machine can save you water so think about changing to a more water efficient machine next time you need to upgrade. In the meantime, always wash a full load to save on your water bill.

Bonus tip: washing in cold water will save you on your energy bill compared with hot water.

Washing Dishes

It is now a well-established fact that use of a dishwasher can save considerable amounts of water over the standard sink wash. Again, the size of your household will impact the water savings from a dishwasher. More people equal more savings! Some key things to increase the efficiency and savings from using a dishwasher:

- Keep them regularly serviced and cleaned
- Always run a full load
- Avoid excessive pre-rinse (or at least under a low flow tap)
- Choose a machine that will suit your household size

Do you have a leak?

Water leaks often go unseen – until you get a massive water bill!

It may not seem that a dripping tap wastes much water, but leaks can be one of the main water wasters in the house costing hundreds of dollars a year.

Taps

Check all your taps (inside and outside), and if there's any leaking, get them fixed as soon as possible.

Toilet

Check if your toilet is leaking by putting a few drops of food dye in the cistern and don't flush. Wait a few minutes and if you see coloured water in your toilet bowl, you've got a leak. Get it fixed as soon as possible.

Hidden Leaks

Sometimes leaks are under ground or are hidden from view. These can lead to losing thousands of litres of water before there is any obvious sign of a leak. A quick and easy check for hidden leaks is to do a three-step leak check.

1. Make sure all the water in your house is turned off. No one is having showers; the washing machine isn't running, and the irrigation system is off.
2. Then record or take a photo of the numbers on your water meter.
3. Wait for at least 15 minutes (better one hour) and then read your meter again.

If the numbers have changed, you probably have a leak, so contact a licenced plumber.

Water Saving Tips in the Community

To help ASTC save water on their next bill report a leak if you see it. Use our reporting tool

www.NeatStreets.com.au.

Friendly with the neighbours or a local business? Let them know if you see a leak in their yard. Something along the lines of "Hi Joe, I saw the dripper under your palm tree is leaking. Thought I'd let you know so you can save some water and not get a big water bill next time. Check out the handy water saving tips on the Alice Springs Town Council website".

Water Saving Tips in the Garden

Know your Drippers

Alice Springs is a hot dry place but one that loves its gardens. A handy way to water your garden is with drip irrigation. Drippers are well suited to the Alice Springs soil profile and reduce losses due to evaporation. But not all drippers are the same. Some are as low as 2L/min and some as high as 20L/min. Make sure you have the right drippers for the needs of your garden. A great guide is the ALEC Alice Springs Gardening Handbook.

Run the irrigation for a few minutes a week while you're watching it to check for lost dripper heads and split irrigation pipes.

Reduce the Pressure

Alice Springs is lucky to have pretty good water pressure which is great for a nice shower and pop up irrigation systems. But high water pressure can cause problems with garden irrigation lines and drippers. High pressure can cause pipes to split and dripper heads to blow off their fittings. All causing more leaks.

A simple fix is a pressure reducer on the tap before the irrigation connection. These are cheap, easy to install and control the pressure in the irrigation system for an optimal set up.

Water for the Season

Alice Springs can be hot and dry, or cold and dry. Knowing how much to water to use on the garden can be hard. There are lots of options out there for the advanced gardener but one way to keep it simple is to adjust your irrigation schedule to the seasons. Low in winter, medium in autumn and spring and higher in summer. Adjusting the amount of water used on your garden over the year can save thousands of litres of water and make your plants a lot happier. Also make sure you always use mulch, it will help you to reduce water loss and heat/cold stress on your plants.

****Did you know you can buy cheap mulch from the Rediscovery Centre at the Regional Waste Management Facility. This mulch is made by grinding up garden waste that's dropped off by residents.**

Water at the Right Time in the Right Place

The optimal time for watering is first thing in the morning. This creates the most amount of water available to the plant to utilise throughout the heat of the day. Watering in the evening can mean water doesn't get used by the plants when they need it most.

Make sure that the irrigation is going to the right place. With drippers it is easy to point the right way. Pop-up sprinklers for lawns can be a bit trickier. Make sure your pop-ups are watering the right place not overlapping with other sprinkler heads or watering the driveway or footpath.

Water Saving Tips for Pools and Spas

A lot of homes in our desert town have swimming pools and spas, allowing us to cool off during our long summers.

Maximising water saving and reducing water waste can be done by following these tips:

Reduce evaporation – as the major cause of water loss, pool covers, blankets, increasing shade and preventing wind exposure.

Reduce backwash - keep your pool and filter clean, only backwashing every 4-6 weeks, and if you are replacing your filter, get a cartridge filter rather than a sand filter.

Check for leaks - look for damp or water saturated spots near the pool, pumps and plumbing equipment. Loose or cracked tiles could indicate a leak.

Water Saving Tips for Car Washing

Alice Springs can be super dusty, so our cars need to be washed more often. Here are some quick tips to save water:

1. Wash your car in the shade on lawn or gravel.
2. Only use a hose for rinsing – use a bucket of soapy water.

3. Washing early morning or later in the day will reduce water evaporation.

More Quick Tips

Turn the tap off while you brush your teeth.

Catch the water from rinsing veggies or waiting for the water to warm-up. Use it to water the garden or top up pet's bowls.

Check if your toilet is leaking by putting a few drops of food dye in the cistern and don't flush. Wait a few minutes and if you see coloured water in your toilet bowl, you've got a leak. Get it fixed as soon as possible.

Water your garden first thing in the morning – this is best for the plants and reduces water evaporation.

Mulch is the best water saver in the garden – get some today from The Rediscovery Centre.

For other tips:

https://www.livingwatersmart.com.au/explore_our_tips_and_advice?combine=&questions=All&page=0