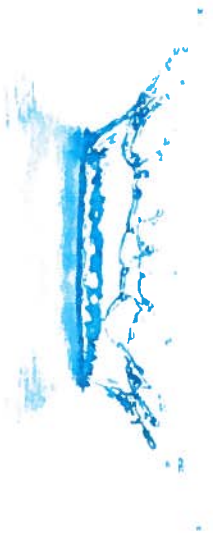


## Make a Splash & Be a Water Hero



Embark on the journey to protect yourself, your family, and your community by taking this simple pledge for water:

I \_\_\_\_\_ solemnly pledge to protect my local watershed, and the watersheds of others, by keeping my water clean; reducing my water use; learning about my watershed; recognizing where my water comes from, how it is used, and where it ends up.

*Clean water starts with ME*

## For more information and ways to become a more involved watershed steward visit:

### US EPA

- [water.epa.gov](http://water.epa.gov)

### NJ Department of Environmental Protection

- [www.nj.gov/dep/watersupply/](http://www.nj.gov/dep/watersupply/)

### Clean Water NJ

- [www.nj.gov/dep/cleanwater/nj/](http://www.nj.gov/dep/cleanwater/nj/)

### NJ Watershed Ambassadors Program

- [www.nj.gov/dep/wms/bear/ameriacorps.htm](http://www.nj.gov/dep/wms/bear/ameriacorps.htm)

### Delaware Riverkeeper Network (PA)

NJ WEF Watershed Stewards Program for high school students

### Surf Your Watershed

- [cfpub.epa.gov/surf/](http://cfpub.epa.gov/surf/)

### Local watershed associations

Brochure prepared by:

### New Jersey Water Association

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*Any views or opinions expressed in this brochure are solely those of the author and do not reflect the views or opinions of NJWA.*

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## Protecting the Source

Small habit changes to conserve our water sources and protect them from contamination



*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever does.*

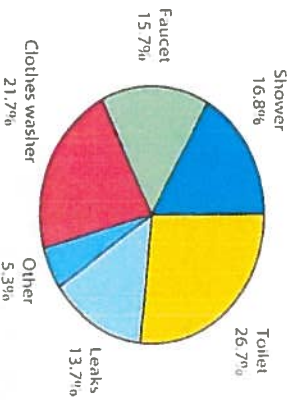
- Margaret Mead

## Conserving Water

*"When the well is dry, we know the worth of water."*

- Benjamin Franklin, 1746

1. Almost **27% of American indoor water use is for flushing toilets!** Installing low-flush toilets or toilet dams made up of plastic will reduce the amount of water per flush.
2. Showers use less water and energy than baths; however, **the typical shower uses 5 gallons per minute** – how many minutes do you spend in the shower?
3. Running the **dishwasher uses about 16 gallons of water** (less than handwashing!) and **a load of laundry uses between 32-60 gallons**. Wait until there are full loads and skip dish pre-rinsing to maximize water use.
4. Garbage disposals use large amounts of water as well as create extra loads for sewer plants. **Start a backyard compost pile** – your garden will thrive!
5. **Check your house for leaks.** A leaky toilet can easily waste 200 gallons per day and a very small leak can easily waste 50 gallons per week.



## Preventing Pollution

Remember that what goes down comes back around!

1. Throw **garbage in trashcans**, not in the streets or down storm drains. Recycle as much as possible.
2. **Pick up after your animals and don't feed ducks and geese.** Animal waste contains bacteria and viruses that can end up in our water supply.
3. **Avoid over fertilizing and avoid pesticide use whenever possible.** Fertilizers can add harmful nutrients to waterways and some pesticides are toxic to humans and animals.
4. **Dispose of household hazardous wastes** (paint thinners, oven cleaners, drain cleaners etc), **used motor oil, and outdated medications properly** – not down any drains or toilets. Many municipalities have hazardous waste disposal days for residents. Check your local listings.
5. Consider buying **chemical-free bathroom and beauty products.** Triclosan in products such as antibacterial soap, deodorant, and toothpaste have been found in aquatic organisms and plants.
6. **Treat your septic system with gentle, loving care.** Improperly maintained systems can contaminate groundwater.

## Water-efficient Landscaping or Xeriscaping

### Xeriscaping

An average American family uses up to 30% of their water for outdoor uses. More than 50% of that water is used to water lawns and gardens. EPA WaterSense estimates that 50% of that water is wasted due to:

1. Overwatering
2. Improper system design
3. Evaporation or wind

Fortunately, there are easy solutions to overcome the water waste in our own backyards:

- ◆ Plant hardy, drought-resistant, and low-water-use NATIVE plants
- ◆ Use efficient irrigation systems and install automatic shut-off nozzles on hoses
- ◆ Irrigate at appropriate times – not before rainstorms or during the extreme heat of a summer day
- ◆ Ensure good soil health
- ◆ Don't forget to mulch! Mulching reduces water evaporation from soil and reduces weeds
- ◆ Maintain your gardens regularly
- ◆ Reduce lawn areas to only those necessary for practical uses to greatly reduce water use and yard maintenance. Imagine no more mowing – oh the things you could do!