

COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

WATER USE EFFICIENCY IDEAS



GENERAL SUGGESTIONS

Increase employee awareness of water use efficiency.

Seek employee suggestions for water use efficiency; locate suggestion boxes in prominent areas.

Install signs in all restrooms encouraging water use efficiency.

When cleaning with water is necessary, use budgeted amounts.

Install sub-meters and read water meters weekly to monitor success of water use efficiency efforts and to help detect leaks.

Assign an employee to monitor water use and waste.

Determine the quantity and purpose of water being used.

Make it easy for building occupants to report leaks.

Ask your local water agency about rebates or financial incentives to offset or minimize cost of water use efficiency measures.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE

Check water supply system for leaks and turn off any unnecessary flows.

Repair dripping faucets and showers and running or leaking toilets.

Install flow reducers and faucet aerators in plumbing fixtures where possible.

Reduce the water used for toilet flushing by installing ultra-low-flush toilets.

As appliances or fixtures wear out, replace them with water-saving models.

Shut off the water to equipment rooms not in use.

Minimize the water used for cooling equipment rooms that are not in use.

Minimize the water used for cooling equipment, as recommended by the manufacturer.

Ensure that cooling units are running efficiently. Shut off cooling units when not needed.

Install closed-loop, multiple-pass systems cooling tower.

CAFETERIA

Turn off the continuous waterflow used to clean the drain trays.

Turn dishwasher off when not in use. Wash full loads only. Replace spray heads in dishwasher to reduce water flow.

Use water from steam tables to wash down cooking area.

Do not use running water to melt ice or frozen foods.

Use water efficient icemakers.

Recycle water consistent with state and county requirements.

Recycle rinse water from the dishwasher or recirculate it to the garbage disposal.

Presoak utensils and dishes in ponded water instead of rinsing them in running water.

Use connectionless food steamers.

EXTERIOR

Convert from high water-using lawns, trees, and shrubs to water efficient landscapes, incorporating plants that provide beautiful color and require less water. Design landscapes that require less water.

Inventory outdoor water use for landscaped areas.

Use turf only where necessary (lunch and play areas).

Water landscape only when needed; two to three times a week is usually sufficient.

In winter, water only during prolonged hot and dry periods. (During spring and fall, most plants need about half the water needed in summer.)

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Use a broom to clean sidewalks and driveways instead of hosing them down.

Avoid excessive fertilizing and pruning that stimulates excessive growth.

Remove weeds and unhealthy plants so remaining plants can benefit from the water saved.

In many cases, older, established plants require only infrequent watering. Look for indications of water-need such as wilt, change of color, or dry soils.

Install soil moisture overrides or timers on sprinklers.

Time watering for morning or evening when evaporation is lowest. Do not water on windy days.

Make sure irrigation equipment applies water uniformly.

Investigate the advantages of installing drip irrigation.

Mulch around plants to reduce evaporation and discourage weeds.

Remove thatch and aerate turf to encourage movement of water to the root zone.

Avoid runoff. Set sprinklers to cover only the lawn or garden, not sidewalks, driveways, or gutters.

Plant native plant species. They are accustomed to local weather.

Adopt the state's model landscape ordinance or local landscape ordinance.

Ask your water agency about water efficient landscape design and potential rebate programs.

And to request this brochure in an alternate format, contact:

**California Department of
Water Resources**

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