

Pollution Prevention At The Home

Recycling



While recycling is a term generally applied to aluminum cans, glass bottles, and newspapers, water can be recycled as well. Through the water cycle, the earth has recycled and reused water for millions of years. Water recycling can reduce and prevent pollution. Application of recycled water for agricultural and landscape irrigation can provide an additional source of nutrients and lessen the need to apply synthetic fertilizers.

Lawn and garden watering makes up nearly 40% of total household water use during the summer. Sometimes plants in a garden or flowerbed will need more water than is provided through normal rainfall. Usually at those times, a gardener will turn on an outside faucet or an sprinkler (or sprinkler system) and water the garden. Turning on that faucet then uses water from a community water supply or a private well.

Using “gray water” is an alternative to using the faucet. Gray water is all the non-toilet produced wastewater in your home. Usually it comes from bathtubs, showers, sinks, washing machines and dishwashers. Gray water can be used to water your outside plants and garden, provided that you follow a few simple guidelines. One such guideline is that a square foot of well-drained, loamy soil can handle about a half gallon of gray water per week. In other words, if your garden area is 500 square feet, then you can put up to 250 gallons of gray water on it per week.

Choosing to use gray water will take a few minutes of planning. Using shower and bathtub water first, followed by using water from the bathroom sink, a utility sink, the washing machine, the kitchen sink and finally the dishwasher, should provide you with a resource you can use to grow your plants.

Getting gray water from your house to your garden can be as simple as placing a bucket under the sink to collect water as it drains to siphoning or pumping water from the bathtub to the yard through a garden hose.

Detailed information about correct usage of gray water can be easily obtained from resources on the internet. One suggested web site is: www.umassgreeninfo.org.



A rain barrel is a system that collects and stores rain water from your roof that would otherwise be lost to runoff and diverted to storm drains, streams and rivers. A rain barrel will save most homeowners about 1,300 gallons of water during the summer months. Saving water helps to protect the environment, will save you money and energy, and can impact runoff to streams and rivers.

Ready-made rain barrels can be purchased from numerous hardware stores and home-improvement outlets. You can also order them on-line from many sources. If you are handy with tools, instructions to build your own rain barrel can be found at www.dnr.state.md.us/ed/rainbarrel.html

RECYCLE OUR RESOURCES

- ♻️ Rinse recyclable cans, bottles and jars in old dishwashing water. Don't use fresh tap water.
- ♻️ Newspapers can be shredded and used as mulch in the garden. This will reduce water evaporation by up to 70%, helping to cut down water use in the summer months, as well as making use of unwanted newspapers.
- ♻️ Buy recycled - approximately 31,780 liters of water is used to manufacture 1 ton of paper. Buying recycled paper is the way to go!
- ♻️ Xeriscape your gardens with plants that are native to your area and/or like it dry. Position your plants where trees and shrubs can protect flowers from the direct sun or from wind - which can save water from evaporating as quickly. Having your soil in top condition using compost is very important. Also when you plant, line the holes and trenches with recycled newspapers to help retain water.