

WATER CONSERVATION IDEAS FOR RESTAURANTS

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS

- Increase employee awareness of water conservation.
- Seek employee suggestions on water conservation; locate suggestion boxes in prominent areas.
- Conduct contests for employees (e.g., posters, slogans, or conservation ideas).
- Install signs encouraging water conservation in employee and customer restrooms.
- Use budgeted amounts when cleaning with water is necessary.
- Read water meter weekly to monitor the success of water conservation efforts.
- Assign an employee to monitor water use and waste.
- Determine the quantity and purpose of water being used.
- Determine other methods of water conservation.
- Provide table signs urging water conservation.
- Serve water only when requested by customers.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE

- Reduce the load on air conditioning units by shutting off air conditioning when and where it is not needed.
- Check water supply system for leaks and turn off any unnecessary flows.
- Repair dripping faucets and showers and continuously running or leaking toilets.
- Install flow reducers and faucet aerators in plumbing fixtures whenever possible.
- Reduce the water used in toilet flushing:
 - Adjust the vacuum flush mechanism.
 - Install toilet tank displacement devices (dams, bottles, or bags—do not use bricks, as they will deteriorate).
- Replace appliances or fixtures that wear out with water-saving models.
- Shut off water supply to equipment and rooms not in use.
- Minimize the water used in cooling equipment, such as air compressors, in accordance with the manufacturer recommendations.
- Keep hot water pipes insulated.
- Avoid excessive boiler and air conditioner blow down. Monitor total dissolved solids levels and blow down only when needed.
- Switch from wet or steam carpet cleaning methods to dry powder methods.
- Instruct clean-up crew to use less water for mopping.
- Change window cleaning schedule from periodic to an on-call/as-required basis.

KITCHEN AREA

- Turn off the continuous flow used to clean the drain trays of the coffee/milk/soda beverage island; clean the trays only as needed.
- 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 to thaw frozen foods.
- Use water-conserving ice makers.
- Recycle water where feasible, consistent with state and county requirements.
- Recycle rinse water from the dishwasher or recirculate it to the garbage disposal.
- Rinse utensils and dishes in ponded water.
- Wash vegetables in basins or plugged sinks; do not let water run in preparation sink.

BAR

- Do not use running water to melt ice in the sink strainers.

EXTERIOR AREAS

- Water landscapes only when needed; two to three times a week is usually sufficient.
- Stop hosing down sidewalks, driveways, and parking lots, except for health or safety reasons.
- Wash delivery vehicles less often.
- Avoid plant fertilizing and pruning that would stimulate 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 irrigation. Look for indications of water need, such as wilting, change of color or dry soils.
- Install soil moisture overrides or timers on sprinkler systems.
- Time watering, when possible, to occur in the early morning or evening when evaporation is lowest.
- Irrigation equipment should apply water uniformly.
- Investigate the advantages of installing drip irrigation systems.
- Mulch around plants to reduce evaporation and discourage weeds.
- Remove thatch and aerate turf to encourage the movement of water to the root zone.
- Avoid runoff and make sure sprinklers cover just the lawn or garden, not sidewalks, driveways, or gutters.
- Do not water on windy days.

For more information contact:

Bureau of Safe Drinking Water
Permits Division
P.O. Box 8467
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8467
Telephone: 717-787-9633

For more information, visit www.dep.pa.gov.