



Willits Water Conservation Program

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Water Saving Tips for Health Care Facilities

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS

- Increase employee awareness of water conservation.
- Seek employee suggestions on water conservation.
- Conduct water conservation suggestion contests.
- Install signs in employee/customer restrooms encouraging water conservation.
- When cleaning with water is necessary, limit (or budget) duration or amounts.
- Read water meter weekly to monitor success of water conservation efforts.
- Assign an employee to monitor water use and waste.
- Determine the quantity and purpose of water being used.

OPERATIONS

- Recycle graywater where feasible, consistent with city requirements.
- Turn off water required for film processing or cooling in the X-ray department when not in use.
- Use full loads in sanitizer, sterilizer, dishwasher, and washing machine consistent with infection control requirements.
- Overhaul faulty steam traps on sterilizers.
- As appliances or fixtures wear out, replace with water-saving models.
- Reduce the load on air conditioning units by shutting off air conditioning when and where it is not needed.
- Recover condensate from air conditioners, refrigerators, freezers, and ice machines; use it as make-up water.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE

- Reduce the load on air conditioning units by shutting off air conditioning when and where it is not needed.
- Detect leaks in water supply system and turn off any unnecessary flows.
- Repair dripping faucets, shower heads, and running or leaking toilets.
- Install flow reducers and faucet aerators in all plumbing fixtures whenever possible.
- Reduce the water used in toilet flushing by either adjusting the vacuum flush mechanism or installing toilet tank displacement devices (dams, bottles, or bags).
- Replace inefficient appliances and fixtures with high efficiency models.
- Shut off water supply to equipment rooms not in use. Discontinue water circulation pumping in unoccupied areas.

- Minimize the water used in cooling equipment, such as air compressors, in accordance with the manufacturer recommendations.
- Insulate hot water pipes.
- Ensure return of steam condensate to the feed water tank for re-use.
- Shut off spray coil units, except where humidity in critical areas cannot be maintained by other means or where the units are used to reduce chiller operation.
- Avoid excessive boiler and air conditioner blow down. Monitor total dissolved solids levels and blow down only when needed.
- Minimize the water used in cooling equipment, such as air compressors, in accordance with the manufacturer recommendations. Explore ways to recycle water used for cooling.

CAFETERIA & KITCHEN AREAS

- Recycle graywater where feasible, consistent with city requirements.
- Turn off the continuous flow used to clean the drain trays of the coffee/milk/soda beverage island.
- Turn dishwasher off when not in use. Wash full loads only.
- Use water from steam tables to wash down cooking area.
- Do not use running water to melt ice or frozen foods. If necessary, use ponded water.
- Use water-conserving ice makers.
- Provide table signs in cafeteria urging water conservation.
- Wash vegetables in ponded water; do not let water run in preparation sink.
- Recycle rinse water from the dishwasher.

LAUNDRY FACILITIES

- Recycle graywater where feasible, consistent with city requirements.
- Reduce water levels to minimize required water per load.
- Reprogram machines to eliminate a rinse or suds cycle, if possible, and not restricted by health regulations.
- Evaluate wash formula and machine cycles for water use efficiency.

EXTERIOR AREAS

- Water landscapes only when needed; two-to-three times a week is usually sufficient.
- Clean sidewalks, driveways, and parking lots by sweeping instead of hosing them down.
- Wash autos, buses, and trucks 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.
- Some older, native plants and trees require less water; and sometimes can suffer if watered as often as younger, non-native species.
- Install soil moisture overrides or timers on sprinkler systems. Time watering to occur in the early morning or evening to reduce evaporation.
- Irrigation equipment should apply water uniformly.
- Consider installing a high efficiency drip irrigation system.
- Mulch around plants to reduce evaporation and discourage weeds.
- Remove thatch and aerate turf to encourage the movement of water to the root zone.
- Contain all water runoff within the property. Prevent water from flowing down street gutters. Sprinklers should cover just the garden, not sidewalks, driveways, or gutters.
- Do not water on windy days.