

HOW I SAVED 8,000 GALLONS OF WATER PER YEAR

By ANTHONY MARGULEAS
Special to the Palisadian-Post

When I read last month's *Palisadian-Post* article on how the Palisades is the biggest water guzzler in LA, I was surprised and embarrassed. I decided to take action and met with my plumber to find out simple ways to save water.

Sure, taking shorter showers is one easy solution, but there are many more – especially in older homes. For example, installing a hot water recirculating pump, which we recently did, can help.

My family lives in a two-story home and it would take 2 to 2½ minutes for hot water to get to our upstairs showers. It was frustrating watching all the cold water go to waste. We calculated we were losing about 2 gallons of water a minute.

Now with the hot water recirculation pump installed, it reduces the wait time for the hot water to about 25 seconds.

With a family of six, we will now save over 8,000 gallons of water a year.

The pumps cost about \$1,500 for parts and installation. They can be installed on a conventional water heater as well as a tankless one in a day or less.

Saving 8,000 gallons of water a year may sound impressive, but when you realize that the average American family of four uses 146,000 gallons of water per year or 400 gallons per day, it puts it into perspective that there is a lot more we all can do.

Aaron Suit with Aaron Suit Plumbing, Inc. said he has been installing a lot of recirculation pumps in the Palisades as homeowners realize how much water it can save them. Suit added that another way to save water is to change your toilets.

"Many new 1.6 per gallon toilets don't work and take multiple flushes, defeating the purpose, so it is important to find ones that work without multiple flushes," Suit said.

Water Usage By the Numbers

The Residential End Uses of Water Study (REUWS) is the largest study of its kind to examine where water is used in single-family homes. Even though it was published in 1999, it is still considered the gold standard for water usage statistics and is cited by organizations, such as the EPA.

The study involved 1,188 households across the U.S. and Canada and tracked how much water they used. The "end uses" included toilets, showers, washing machines, faucets, lawn water-

Toilets

A person flushes the toilet an average of 5.05 times per day, according to the REUWS. Today, low-flush toilets use 1.6 gallons per flush while older toilets can use as much as 3.5 to 7 gallons per flush.

Tip: Replace water-wasting toilets with a WaterSense labeled model. They use 1.28 gallons per flush or less, are certified to be high performing and can reduce the amount of water a family uses for toilets by 20 to 60 percent.

Tip: Check for leaky toilets. A running toilet can waste about 200 gallons every day.

Faucets

A bathroom faucet generally runs at 2 gallons per minute.

Tip: Turn off the tap while brushing your teeth or shaving to save more than 200 gallons of water per month.

Washing Machines

In the REUWS, the average household did about one load of laundry per day.

Tip: Invest in a high-efficiency washing machine. Traditional models use 27 to 54 gallons of water per load; water- and energy-conserving models use less than 27 gallons per load.

Tip: Wash only full loads of laundry or use the appropriate water level or load size selection on the washing machine.

Outdoors

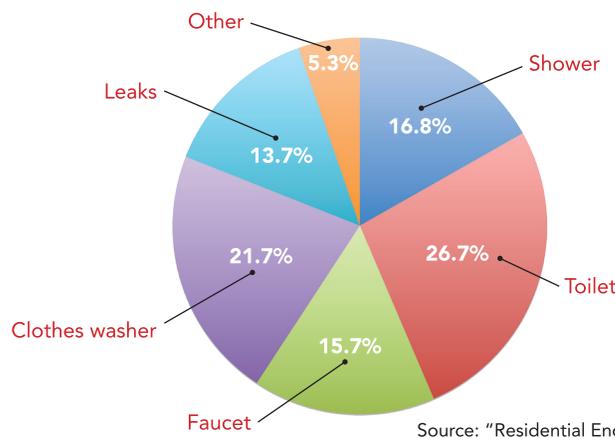
Of the estimated 29 billion gallons of water used daily by households in the United States, nearly 7 billion gallons, or 30 percent, are devoted to outdoor water use, according to the EPA. In the hot summer months, or in dry climates, a household's outdoor water use can be as high as 70 percent.

Tip: Sweep driveways, sidewalks, and steps rather than hosing off.

Tip: Wash the car with water from a bucket, or consider using a commercial car wash that recycles water.

Tip: If you have a pool, use a cover to reduce evaporation when the pool is not being used.

HOW MUCH WATER DO WE USE?



Source: "Residential End Uses of Water"

ing and more.

According to the study, there's one room in single-family residences that uses the most water – the bathroom. Did you know that your toilet alone can account for 27 percent of your home's total water consumption?

The study shows that individuals use nearly 70 gallons of water indoors per day. Here are some tips from the EPA to help you lower that number.

Showers

In the REUWS, the average shower lasted just over 8 minutes and used 17.2 gallons of water. The average flow rate for showers in the REUWS was 2.2 gallons per minute.

Tip: Replace showerheads with WaterSense labeled models. Replacing just one showerhead can save the average family 2,900 gallons of water. Typically, showers use less water than baths as long as you aren't taking extra long showers.