

Township of Bloomfield: Water Conservation

On September 8, 2009, the Bloomfield Township Council unanimously adopted a new **Water Conservation Ordinance**. This flyer explains **what** the changes are, **why** they were made, and **how** they affect you, the residents and organizations in Bloomfield.

What

The ordinance simply asks you to do these things:

- Conserve water used indoors
- Water your lawn **no more than 2 days per week** (any 2 days you choose)
- Water your lawn only **between 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m.**
- Don't water any lawn area longer than **30 minutes**
- Don't water your lawn **when it's raining**, or when it's already rained longer than 30 minutes
- Make sure your installed sprinkler/irrigation systems has a **rain sensor shut-off**, per state law



The following are **exempt** from these restrictions:

- **Flowers and shrubs can be watered as needed** with a hose that has an automatic shut-off nozzle
- **Cars can be washed** any day when done with a hose that has an automatic shut-off nozzle
- Commercial crops, sod farms, nurseries, retail nurseries, golf courses can be watered as necessary
- **Lawn treated with chemicals that need watering** to preserve landscaping or establish new landscaping can be watered for 1 extra day only
- **New lawns or landscaping** can be watered as needed within the first 21 days
- When a licensed irrigation contractor is **checking an irrigation system**
- When **using reclaimed water** (from rainwater harvesting, graywater systems, etc.)



The ordinance also spells out what's required during a severe water emergency. While we don't expect that many will violate the ordinance, and it's not a top priority for enforcement, penalties can be steep. After a first warning, violators can be fined from \$25 to \$2,000, and extreme violators can be penalized with up to 90 days of imprisonment or community service.

Why

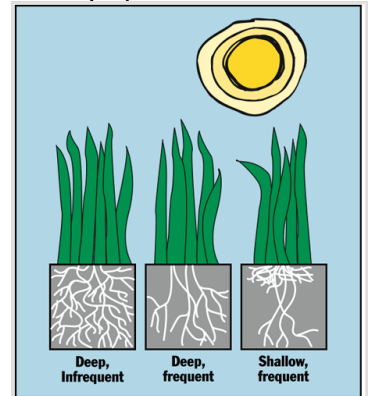
Fresh water is a critical and increasingly endangered natural resource. Water shortages can have dangerous and significant implications for public health as well as for the local economy. Demands on New Jersey's limited water supply due to population growth and development have greatly increased. Saving water is a smart thing to do for New Jersey's citizens year round.



In Bloomfield, we have to pay Newark to "wheel" our water from the Wanaque Reservoir. This is expensive, and the cost is passed down to consumers. The less we use, the less we pay. Some are even suggesting Bloomfield needs its own water tower to help reduce this dependence on Newark's water system, but that will cost a few million dollars. If we all use less water, the less we'll need these expensive solutions. We also suffer from flooding of our rivers due to heavy rains and our highly developed land, which washes away soil and stresses the water system. If we can put less drinkable, or potable, water on our lawns, we'll have more fresh water to drink, bathe, and cook with, with fewer chemicals needed to purify the water.

How

- We generally get enough rainfall that we don't need to water more than 2 days per week.
- If we water our lawns for longer periods (up to 30 minutes) on fewer days, our lawns will grow deeper roots and will be more drought-tolerant and disease- and pest-resistant.
- Watering early in the morning is best anyway. Watering in the heat of the day causes most of the water to evaporate instead of soaking into the soil where it's most needed.
- When you re-seed or over-seed in the fall or put in a new lawn, choose native, drought-resistant grasses. They don't need extra watering, and they're more resistant to local pests and diseases.
- Some are replacing part of their lawn with trees, shrubs, other ground-cover plants, vegetable gardens, or mulch, which use less water and fertilizer.
- Indoors, be sure to fix leaks and drips, don't let the water run while brushing your teeth or washing dishes, turn on your dishwasher only when you have a full load, and if you take long showers, try to shorten them by a few minutes.
- If you can, replace old faucets and showerheads with new WaterSense faucets and showerheads that save water, and replace old toilets with WaterSense toilets that use 1.6 liters or less water per flush (or a dual-flush toilet, which uses even less water for "#1").



If we all take a few of these easy and sensible steps, we'll not only save money on our water bills, we'll also do our part to preserve fresh water for our town and protect our environment.

For more information, see www.GreenerBloomfield.org/water, www.cleanwaternj.org, and the www.epa.gov/WaterSense.

