

INLAND SEAS EDUCATION ASSOCIATION PRESENTS

THE GREAT LAKES STEWARDSHIP CHALLENGE



Did you know...

- ◆ The average 5 minute shower takes between 25-50 gallons of water.
- ◆ You can refill an 8 oz. glass of water approximately 15,000 times for the same cost as a 6-pack of pop.
- ◆ The average family of 4 uses approximately 400 gallons of water a day.
- ◆ You can save up to 8 gallons of water a day by turning off the tap while brushing your teeth in the morning & at bedtime.
- ◆ High-efficiency washing machines save about 14 gallons of water per load compared to traditional models.
- ◆ Easily corrected household water leaks account for 8% of the average water bill.
- ◆ A leaky toilet can waste about 200 gallons of water every day.
- ◆ Water-efficient irrigation systems help save 11 billion gallons of water a year across the United States.
- ◆ In the United States, 36 states anticipate some degree of water shortage by 2013.
- ◆ If all houses in the U.S. installed water-efficient appliances the country would save more than 3 trillion gallons of water & more than \$18 billion per year!

PRACTICAL WAYS TO CONSERVE WATER

- ◆ When washing dishes by hand, don't let the water run while rinsing. Fill one sink with wash water & the other with rinse water.
- ◆ Only run your washing machine & dishwasher when they are full.
- ◆ Install low-flow faucets, shower heads, reduced-flow toilets, & other water saving appliances.



- ◆ In most areas, drinking water from the tap is of excellent quality & there is no need to buy bottled water. Drink water from the tap & save our environment from plastic bottles. If you do buy bottled water, reuse the bottles.
- ◆ Never throw away what could be used for something else. When you clean your fish tank you can use the water you've drained to water your plants. This water is rich in nitrogen & phosphorous providing you with a free & effective fertilizer.
- ◆ Take short showers & turn the water off while you shampoo.
- ◆ Repair leaky faucets immediately. We're more likely to notice leaky faucets indoors but don't forget to check outdoor faucets, pipes, & hoses for leaks.
- ◆ Turn off the water when you brush your teeth. This can save up to 8 gallons of water a day!

HELPFUL HOUSEHOLD TIPS

- ◆ Never dispose of paints, thinners, motor oil, antifreeze, pesticides, solvents, or batteries in the drain or the trash. Use recycling centers & household hazardous waste collections.
- ◆ Recycle aluminum cans, plastic & glass bottles, office paper, & newspaper! Every newspaper that gets recycled saves the equivalent of 17 trees & 7,000 gallons of water!
- ◆ Make environmentally smart food choices in your daily life. Eat products that come from agriculture that respects the environment, using less water & fewer pesticides, herbicides, & fertilizers than intensive agriculture.
- ◆ Be aware that many chemicals commonly used around the home are toxic. Select less toxic alternatives & use non-toxic substitutes whenever possible.

LAWN & YARD CARE

- ◆ Keep your lawn off drugs! It is best not to use pesticides, herbicides, or fertilizers on your property, but if you must use them sparingly. Always read the directions before use & never use more than recommended. Don't use these products just before or during rain.
- ◆ Water your plants during the early morning hours when temperatures are cooler to minimize evaporation. Keep in mind that in some families, lawn & garden irrigation represents 50% of their total water use!
- ◆ Plant native species that are adapted to the local environment.
- ◆ Leave grass clippings on your lawn - they will decompose & provide nitrogen for your lawn.



- ◆ Start a compost pile that will create natural fertilizer. You can compost leaves & other yard trimmings along with your organic household waste.
- ◆ Decrease runoff & increase filtration of water into the ground by spreading mulch on bare ground, building borders around gardens, & minimizing paved areas.
- ◆ Reroute downspouts to drain over soil or green areas rather than paved areas.
- ◆ Maintain your septic system. Keep the drainfield clear, clean the system regularly, & have the system inspected every 1-2 years.

HELP STOP THE SPREAD OF INVASIVE SPECIES

- ◆ Before moving your boat from one body of water to another, inspect your boat & trailer & remove all aquatic plants and animals. Drain all of the water from your boat, motor, bilge, live wells, & bait wells.
- ◆ Rinse your boat & fishing equipment with hot tap water (104°F or higher) or high-pressure water, or dry them thoroughly & leave them outside in the sun for 5 days before going to new waters.
- ◆ Empty your bait bucket on land or in a trash receptacle – not in the water. Never release live bait into a water body or release aquatic animals from one water body into another (the bait may not be native to the area).
- ◆ Never release aquarium pets into the wild. Pets like fish, turtles, & reptiles are often not native to the area & can become invasive species. If you do not want to keep your pet return it to a local pet store.
- ◆ Set up a freshwater aquarium. Research which native plants & fish can inhabit the aquarium & then use your aquarium to teach your family and friends about native and invasive species.
- ◆ Learn what different invasive species look like, so you can report a new infestation of an invasive plant or animal to your local natural resource agency.

OTHER WAYS YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

- ◆ Take your car to a car wash so the dirty soap water will go to a sanitary sewer rather than a storm sewer.
- ◆ Clean up after your pets. Pet waste contains nutrients & pathogens that can contaminate water.
- ◆ Walk or ride a bike when possible or carpool when driving is necessary. Driving less reduces the amount of airborne pollutants that reach the environment & can lead to acid rain.



- ◆ Don't feed waterfowl. unnaturally large populations of ducks & geese contribute to beach contamination problems & swimmer's itch.

GET INVOLVED

- ◆ Create water conservation signs & post them in your school bathroom & cafeteria. Contact local restaurants, gas stations, & stores & ask them to hang these signs in their public bathrooms.
- ◆ Participate in clean-up activities in your neighborhood.
- ◆ Build a rain garden in a low-lying area of your yard to filter storm water & prevent erosion.
- ◆ Promote environmental education. Help educate people in your community about ways in which they can help protect water quality.
- ◆ Get involved in your community beach, river, & park clean-ups. Participate in water quality testing & monitoring through community groups in your area. Many organizations are looking for volunteers.
- ◆ Get your community & your school involved in water quality projects & ask the media to cover your efforts.
- ◆ Write or call your elected representatives to inform them about your concerns & encourage legislation to protect water resources.
- ◆ Get involved in local planning & zoning decisions & encourage your local officials to develop erosion & sediment control ordinances.
- ◆ Learn more! Continue to learn more about protecting the Great Lakes when you go home. Informational websites include:

United States Geological Survey - <http://ga.water.usgs.gov/edu>

Environmental Protection Agency - www.epa.gov/water/kids.html

Environmental Protection Agency - www.epa.gov/watersense/

Inland Seas Education Association - www.schoolship.org

Water Conservation Tips - www.monolake.org/socialwater/wctips.htm

Water Use it Wisely - www.wateruseitwisely.com

Earth Easy - www.eartheasy.com/live_water_saving.htm



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