

# Water Conservation

Most Americans are familiar with the concept of water conservation and have a fairly well constructed idea of why that is important. News articles and documentaries are readily available to see how water scarcity in the southeast United States is influencing policies and politics. Americans are generally portrayed as being wasteful with our water consumption in comparison to other countries. The national average of water consumption per person is 100 gallons. This is a mind boggling thought when you consider how many gallons that translates into per year and per lifetime for the average person. One thing that is not talked about very often is that Georgia was ranked number one in the nation for water loss control requirements across the state by the Alliance for Water Efficiency. These requirements are meant to encourage citizens to be more water conscious. Actions like these are why water withdrawals in our region have fallen by 10 percent, even as our population has increased by 1.3 million. Cherokee County has one of the lowest residential per person usages in Metro Atlanta at 47 gallons per person per day. Even when you include industry in the figure we are still under the national average at 82 gallons per person per day. Policies such as tiered pricing per gallon that was introduced in 2009 increases the cost per gallon as usage goes up.

As with most things in our lives there is always room for improvement, and our water usage is no different. Most people are aware of beneficial products such as low flow toilets, low flow shower heads, and the use of aerators on your faucets. When you look at how Georgia compares to the national average for water usage, it is safe to say most of our customers are already utilizing these devices. If you happen to be in the market for a new toilet, shower head, or faucet look for products carrying the "WaterSense" logo. This logo is only applied if the fixture has been tested by EPA to work as well as a non-labeled product but be 20% more efficient. Cherokee County is already a leader in water conservation, but we would like to encourage our customers to be mindful of unintentional water usage. This could be a slow leak such as a constant drip on a rarely used faucet or the continual running of a downstairs toilet.

Consider the following avoidable habits to conserve water when in the home:

1. Adjust automatic lawn sprinklers when a rain shower has just come through.
2. Turn off the faucet when you are brushing your teeth, this alone could save up to a gallon per brush.
3. Using the dishwasher instead of handwashing saves water and elbow grease.
4. Showering instead of taking a bath. An added perk is that your water is more likely to stay hot for the duration.
5. Washing larger loads of laundry will cut down on water consumption and in most cases is better on your machine too.

We encourage our customers to be observant of water usage both in their homes and out in the community. In your home, be aware of your normal monthly water usage to detect potential leaks in your system. If you have any questions about how to detect a leak or any other topics you would like to see discussed in this article, please send them to [ccwsaea@gmail.com](mailto:ccwsaea@gmail.com).