



# Do It Yourself!

## Household Water Assessment

### How Water Wise Is Your Household?

Is your house as water efficient as it can be? This do-it-yourself household water use assessment will help you understand how much water you use and provide ways to reduce your usage. This assessment may show you ways to conserve water and save money at the same time!

#### *In this assessment you will...*

1. Gauge your household water efficiency based on a recent water bill.
2. Find potential toilet leaks.
3. Calculate how long you should water your lawn when using your irrigation system. Water outdoors only before 10 a.m. and after 4 p.m. Check [gadrought.org](http://gadrought.org) to see if additional restrictions are in place.
4. Learn how to save water inside and outside your home.

#### *What you need:*

1. A recent water bill to gauge your household water use.
2. Food dye or leak tablets to find potential toilet leaks.
3. At least four cylindrical containers (e.g. food cans) and a ruler to assess your irrigation system.



## How Much Water Do You Use?

Use your water bill and a calculator to determine your water use per person in your household per day.

a. Water consumption or use from your water bill \_\_\_\_\_ gallons. (If your consumption is measured in ccf, L or m<sup>3</sup> use the following conversions: ccf x 748 = gallons, L x 0.264 = gallons, m<sup>3</sup> x 264 = gallons)

b. \_\_\_\_\_ days in billing cycle

c. Household use = gallons (a.) ÷ days in billing cycle (b.) \_\_\_\_\_

d. \_\_\_\_\_ number of people living in your home

ANSWER: Divide household use (c.) by number of people living in your home (d.)

e. \_\_\_\_\_ This is your household water use per person per day.

**Not sure what your water bill is telling you? Review “Understanding Your Water Bill” on page 3 to gain insight on your water usage over time.**

## How Efficient Is Your Water Use?

How does your water use measure up? Note that water use varies by season. Now that you have calculated your water use per person per day (e.), compare that number to the rest of the metro area.

Gallons per Person per Day			
Winter	Summer	Rank	Comments
<50	<50	EFFICIENT	You are using water wisely! Share your techniques with your friends and neighbors.
51-60	51-70	AVERAGE	You use water like the average north Georgia resident. Learn how to conserve water and reduce your water bill at <a href="http://MyDropCounts.org">MyDropCounts.org</a> .
Exceeds 61	Exceeds 71	INEFFICIENT	You are using too much water. Find out how you can reduce water waste and significantly reduce your bill at <a href="http://MyDropCounts.org">MyDropCounts.org</a> .

Note: Efficient water use assumes that outdoor watering is minimal.

## Take the Water Conservation Pledge!

Now that you know how your water use compares to others, pledge to conserve more water! Go to [MyDropCounts.org](http://MyDropCounts.org) to let us know how you plan to save water.

**Most water providers in metro Atlanta provide high efficiency showerheads and aerators free of charge to their customers. Contact your local water provider for more information.**

# Understanding Your Water Bill

Water providers in the 15 counties of metro Atlanta implement conservation pricing. Pricing is based on tiers. If the amount of water you use exceeds a given tier limit, the additional water used will be billed at the rate of the next tier.

Water usage is generally listed in gallons or hundred cubic feet (ccf).



## Your Water Utility

Payment location at 1000 Main Street, Your City, ST, xxxxx  
Customer Service (xxx)xxx-xxxx

Pay Online @ [www.YourWaterUtility.com](http://www.YourWaterUtility.com)

Jane Doe  
500 Maple Dr.  
Your City, XXXXX

Bill date: xx/xx/xxxx

Days in the Period or Billing Days is the number days in the billing cycle

Account Number	Prior Meter Reading	Prior Usage (gallons)	Date	Current Meter Reading	Current Usage (gallons)	Date
xxxxxxxx	xxx	xxxx	xx/xx/xxxx	xxxx	xxxx	xx/xx/xxxx

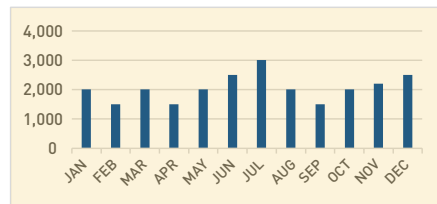
Amount From Previous Bill . . . . . \$xx.xx  
PAYMENT xx/xx/xxxx . . . . . \$xx.xx

WATER Use Charges	Usage	Rate	Charges
WATER Base fee			\$xx.xx
WATER usage (Tier 1)	xxxx	x.xx	\$xx.xx
WATER usage (Tier 2)	xxxx	x.xx	\$xx.xx
<b>TOTAL WATER Charges</b>			<b>\$xx.xx</b>

IRRIGATION Use Charges	Usage	Rate	Charges
IRRIGATION Base fee			\$xx.xx
IRRIGATION usage (Tier 1)	xxxx	x.xx	\$xx.xx
IRRIGATION usage (Tier 2)	xxxx	x.xx	\$xx.xx
<b>TOTAL IRRIGATION Charges</b>			<b>\$xx.xx</b>

SEWER Charges	Usage	Rate	Charges
SEWER base fee			\$xx.xx
SEWER usage	xxxx	x.xx	\$xx.xx
<b>Total SEWER amount due</b>			<b>\$xx.xx</b>
<b>Total Amount Due by: xx/xx/xxx</b>			<b>\$xx.xx</b>

Current Month	xxxx
Last Month	xxxx
Current Month Last Year	xxxx
Days in Period	xx



This chart illustrates the historic water usage over the last 12 months. It can help you track your water conservation efforts.

RETURN LOWER PORTION WITH PAYMENT

Irrigation use charges may not be typical. You will see this if you have a separate irrigation meter.

Make Checks Payable: Your Water Utility

Jane Doe  
500 Maple Dr.  
Your City, ST, XXXXX

**YOUR WATER UTILITY**  
1000 MAIN STREET  
YOUR CITY, XXXXX

**ACCOUNT NUMBER: xxxxxxxx**

**AMOUNT DUE BY XX/XX/XXXX: \$ XXX.XX**

**AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$** \_\_\_\_\_

If you don't see sewer charges on your water bill, you likely have a septic system. Septic systems need inspection and pumping every 3-5 years. Contact your local department of public health to find out if you're on septic.

# How to Become More Water Efficient

## Check for Silent Toilet Leaks

One of the fastest ways to save water is to find and fix leaks. Make sure to regularly check for leaks in and around your home. A dripping faucet or showerhead is pretty easy to spot, but a silent toilet leak isn't as easy to see, and it can waste up to 200 gallons a day! Checking your toilet for leaks is easy as 1, 2, 3...

1. Put a couple of drops of food coloring or dye tablets in the tank.
2. Wait 20 minutes. DO NOT FLUSH THE TOILET.
3. If the water in your toilet bowl changes color, you have a leak!

In many cases, toilet leaks are caused by faulty toilet flappers, which you can easily replace yourself. Consider contacting a plumber if that doesn't fix the problem. For more water conservation tips, visit [MyDropCounts.org](http://MyDropCounts.org). Visit [northgeorgiawater.org/toiletrebate](http://northgeorgiawater.org/toiletrebate) to find out if you are eligible for a toilet rebate.

## Calculate Your Irrigation System's Watering Rate

The clay soils in metro Atlanta absorb water slowly. If you choose to water outdoor plants, the most water efficient way to water is through several short cycles of six to ten minutes each. Doing so will allow the water to be absorbed by the soil and reduce runoff. Water infrequently and don't water during a rain event, just after a rain event, or when a rain event is predicted. Use a rain gauge or install rain sensors for large systems to help you determine the need to water.

Let's figure out how much time it takes for your irrigation system to water one inch. From there you can determine the amount of time you need for each water cycle and the number of cycles you need. You'll need several clean uniform cylindrical containers (e.g. tuna cans), a ruler, a pencil and paper.

1. Place containers evenly throughout an irrigation zone of your irrigation system. If you only have one irrigation zone, spread the containers across your system.
2. Run each zone in your system for 15 minutes. Remember that you can only do this before 10 a.m. and after 4 p.m. And, if further watering restrictions are in place, only water on those days of the week that you are currently allowed to water (more information at [gadrought.org](http://gadrought.org)).
3. Measure the amount of water in the cans with a ruler.
4. Determine the average of the measurements for each zone.
5. Multiply the average for each zone calculated by 4. This is the average amount of water your system provides if it runs for one hour.
6. In metro Atlanta, outdoor plants need about one inch of water a week. Adjust your sprinklers as needed based on the results of step 5. For example, if your average measurement is one inch over the course of an hour, adjust your system so that it runs for a total of 60 minutes per week either as six 10 minute cycles or 10 six minute cycles. The short multiple cycles will allow the water to be absorbed by the soil.

**Native plants require less water. Consider replacing non-natives with drought tolerant natives. Want to be a super water saver? Join the Society of Intentionally Dry Lawns at [MyDropCounts.org/jointhesociety](http://MyDropCounts.org/jointhesociety).**



Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District  
[northgeorgiawater.org](http://northgeorgiawater.org)

