



On the Water Front

January 2021

A Message from John Balliew, P.E., President/CEO

Small changes can minimize waste, conserve water

We all have a responsibility to be good environmental stewards.

El Paso Water has helped make water conservation a way of life in our community. For three decades, water conservation has been a priority for us, and as a result we have seen total water usage per person decline by 30 percent.

During the pandemic, many households at home for work or school saw water use rise as we used more water for drinking, cooking and washing. Similarly, residential waste volumes have risen as the City's Environmental Services Department had to pause recycling because of pandemic-related staffing shortages.

Increases in water use and waste also impact energy use since waste removal relies on transportation and water production and pumping depend on electricity.

Making small changes at home have the potential to make a significant impact in our community.

El Pasoans know that minor changes such as washing clothes in cold water and using their dishwasher instead of washing dishes by hand make a difference in your water bill.

But conserving water isn't just about turning off the tap while brushing or using water-saving toilets, it also means making conscious, responsible decisions that will minimize waste as well.

- At EPWater, we always say no to bottled water. Unlike bottled water, tap water faces more rigid quality and health standards. Trust your tap, and carry a reusable water bottle.
- The largest component sent to landfills is food waste, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. Wasting food is not only money down the drain, but a waste of energy, land, water and fertilizers needed to grow and distribute food. Make a shopping list with specific meals in mind, get creative in the kitchen with your leftovers or learn how to compost your food scraps at home.
- Buy foods with little or no packaging.
- Use reusable containers to store your food instead of plastic bags, aluminum foil or plastic cling wrap.
- Avoid disposable cups, plates, utensils and straws.
- Clean with reusable rags instead of paper towels.

Unfortunately, the pandemic spurred excessive waste in the form of disposable masks, gloves and sanitizer bottles. But, as people stayed at home to prevent the spread of COVID, it also opened up the opportunity for many of us to improve our sustainable living skills.

According to the EPA, the average American generates 4.9 pounds of trash daily. We can all set personal goals for reducing the household trash we generate each week.

If each household makes these minor adjustments, we can make a big difference to build a more sustainable community for our children and grandchildren. Together, we can ensure that El Paso has a more sustainable environment and reliable, high quality water for years to come.



Using a dishwasher when completely full can help conserve water.



Compost your food scraps at home.



On the Water Front is a publication of El Paso Water.
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