



City of Grand Junction
Clifton Water District
CSU Cooperative Extension
Town of Palisade
Ute Water Conservancy District

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Several simple changes can reduce water use and bills

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One of the most precious natural resources Western Colorado possesses often gets overlooked. Water has turned the Grand Valley into a thriving community full of agriculture and recreational activities. Because the Grand Valley is located in a high mountain desert, this resource is limited. Water is an irreplaceable resource that must be shared by farmers, fishermen, and the increasing number of residents in Western Colorado.

In the year 2020, the Grand Valley's population will reach 200,000 people, according to Mesa County's Environmental Scan. Despite a larger population of water users, there will not be any additional water for home water use, agriculture or recreation. It is possible that water providers or local governments may have to restrict water use or increase water rates in the future.

Some residents believe that if people in Colorado do not use their full allocation of river water, they will lose it to downstream states, such as Nevada and California. The truth is that water needs to be conserved no matter which state you live in. I challenge you to monitor your monthly water usage and make changes in your water use inside and outside your home or business.

Start by determining how many gallons of water you used last month. The amount of water you used can be found on your monthly statement or by contacting your water provider. Set a goal to reduce that amount by 20 percent. Now all you have to do is make simple and inexpensive changes to your home that will prevent unnecessary water and money from going down the drain.

Here are some places to start:

Fix faucet leaks. According to the American Water Works Association, indoor water leaks account for more than 14 percent of the water you use in your home. Repair leaking faucets, which can usually be fixed by replacing worn washers.

Check your toilet. Leaking toilets can drain your bank account and are the leading cause of high water bills, according to the AWWA. To determine if your toilet is leaking, place a small amount of food coloring (or dye tablets from your hardware store) in the tank of the toilet. Check back in a few minutes and see if the toilet bowl has any of the color leaking from the tank. If the water in the bowl of the toilet remains clear, your toilet is not leaking.

Look outside. Check your evaporative cooler and irrigation systems for leaks.

Find more ways to save water. Start by visiting www.thedripwebsite.com.

We live in a semiarid climate where droughts will always be a part of our environment. Water for our future means conserving now. The Drought Response Information Project (DRIP) is a collaboration between the valley's domestic water utilities and CSU Cooperative Extension to provide information and educate the public about drought and the importance of water conservation.