



ORANGE WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY

*A public, non-profit agency providing water, sewer and reclaimed water services
to the Carrboro-Chapel Hill community.*

Water conservation opportunities for businesses and other non-residential customers

The choice of effective and cost-effective conservation practices and investments for businesses, offices, institutions, etc. depends on factors such as how a business uses water, the efficiency of existing fixtures and appliances, the cost of replacing or retrofitting existing water-using devices, maintenance costs, and the time of year when the business uses the most water.

(Businesses pay seasonal water rates, which are higher from May through September.)

Effective conservation opportunities for a business may include the following, depending on circumstances. Please note that this is an overview of several options, and that additional information and evaluation may be necessary to determine the feasibility and potential benefits of a given conservation method.

- **REPLACING OLD, INEFFICIENT FIXTURES/APPLIANCES/EQUIPMENT:**

- ✓ **Faucets and showerheads** (if in use); adding or replacing faucet aerators.
- ✓ **Toilets and urinals.** New models may use only one-third to one-half as much water as old ones. (In many offices, toilet flushing may be the largest single water use.)
- ✓ **Dish- or clothes washers** if they are a significant factor in water use at a business.
- ✓ **Vehicle washing** equipment.

- **RETROFITTING TOILETS** with water-saving flappers or a water “dam,” putting a container of water in a toilet tank to reduce water use in flushing. (Flush volumes of tankless toilets may be reduced by changing the flush valve as indicated below.)

- **REPLACING THE VALVE IN OLDER VALVE-TYPE TOILETS AND URINALS** with a new valve that uses less water.

- Checking for and promptly **FIXING LEAKS**, which can waste thousands of gallons per month. (OWASA may provide an account credit once every three years for fixing a non-irrigation leak.

- Installing **LEAK DETECTION AND PREVENTION DEVICES.**

- Installing **AUTOMATIC FAUCETS**, which open when a hand, etc. is under the faucet and stop when not in use.

- **LOWERING WATER PRESSURE** by installing an adjustable Water Pressure Reducing Valve (PRV) or adjusting the pressure if one is already in place. The opportunity to reduce pressure is subject to any operating requirements for adequate pressure in appliances/equipment.

- Installing **FLUSHLESS URINALS** (careful selection of the model is important).

- Installing a **POINT OF USE OR RECIRCULATING HOT WATER SYSTEM** to reduce energy and water use.

- Using water-efficient **PRE-RINSE SPRAY VALVES** in dishwashing.

- Using **WATER-SMART IRRIGATION** methods and/or updating landscaped areas with drought-tolerant grass, trees, shrubs and groundcover.

- Installing rain barrels, cisterns or other tanks to **USE RAINWATER** for toilet flushing (may be most practical in new construction or a major renovation), irrigation, etc.

- Using OWASA's highly treated wastewater, or "**RECLAIMED WATER**," for allowable non-drinking purposes such as
 - ✓ Irrigation of landscaping including grass
 - ✓ Vehicle and equipment washing
 - ✓ Pressure washing of buildings
 - ✓ Decorative fountains and ponds. However, if fountain or pond water is discarded, it must be returned to the sanitary sewer system.
 - ✓ Soil compaction and dust control
 - ✓ Concrete mixing and concrete cutting
 - ✓ Street sweeping (not street cleaning)
 - ✓ Hydro-seeding and fertilizer mixing
 - ✓ Underground directional boring (not digging wells)

We give away highly treated wastewater reclaimed water at our Mason Farm Wastewater Treatment Plant to people who receive required training and bring containers that hold at least 50 gallons. *For more information:* please click the following link: [Reclaimed water available in "bulk fill" program](#), send e-mail to webmaster@owasa.org or contact our Sustainability Manager at 919-537-4210.

Also, we would be glad to provide technical assistance such as estimating potential drinking water/dollar savings if you wish to evaluate the feasibility of extending our reclaimed water system to serve your location.

In addition to the uses above, reclaimed water may be used to flush non-residential toilets, for fire protection and as make-up water for cooling towers in chiller systems.

For more information

OWASA:

Sustainability Manager: (919) 537-4210

E-mail: webmaster@owasa.org

Fax: (919) 968-4464

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's WaterSense program:

webpage: <http://www.epa.gov/WaterSense/>

North Carolina Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance

webpage: <http://www.p2pays.org/>

1639 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1639 (919) 715-6500 or (800) 763-0136