

CARING FOR OUR WATER

7 STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO SAVE AND PROTECT OUR WATER

Clean water is a precious resource essential to our survival. We hear about disastrous shortages in other countries and even in the western part of our own country but may feel immune to such shortages here in North Carolina. However in spite of recent abundant rainfall, we do not have to go back very far in time to recall severe droughts and water restrictions in our own area. As this area of North Carolina grows by leaps and bounds and as the reservoirs supplying our water become more polluted due to mismanagement by our government, it is not hard to imagine a future where clean water will be in short supply. It is easy to feel powerless in the face of large issues like this, but if each of us takes small steps to care for our water, we can make a difference. Basically it comes down to using less water and trying to avoid polluting our water. And as a very significant side benefit, we will also be reducing our water and energy bills!

- **DON'T USE BOTTLED WATER**

It requires 3 liters of water to make 1 liter bottle of water to say nothing of the energy expended in making the bottle, transporting it, and disposing of it. Carry a reusable PET-free water bottle to avoid having to purchase bottled water whenever possible.

- **USE WATER-SAVING SHOWER HEADS, LOW-FLOW FAUCET AERATORS AND HIGH-EFFICIENCY TOILETS**

If you were frustrated by earlier models of these devices, you may find that the technology has improved and that newer ones give better results. When replacing these devices look for ones that are WaterSense rated by the EPA: www3.epa.gov/watersense/products/

- **USE YOUR DISHWASHER AND CLOTHES WASHER WISELY**

When possible, use your dishwasher and clothes washer only for full loads, especially if the amount of water cannot be adjusted to the load. When replacing these appliances, look for Energy Star rated appliances which use less energy and water: www.energystar.gov

- **CHECK FOR AND REPAIR WATER LEAKS**

A small drip from a worn faucet washer can waste 20 gallons of water per day. A slow leaking toilet and larger leaks can waste much more. To detect a leak in your toilet, put a little food coloring in your toilet tank and see if it leaks through without flushing. To check your house for other undetected leaks, use the house water meter according to these instructions: www.todayshomeowner.com/how-to-check-a-water-meter-for-plumbing-leaks/

- **RECYCLE WATER FOR INDOOR AND OUTDOOR WATERING**

Some ideas include: collect water for watering plants in a bucket while washing vegetables and while warming water for showers, for doing dishes, and for laundry; collect water for outdoor watering in Rain Barrels.

- **MINIMIZE OR ELIMINATE USE OF HERBICIDES AND PESTICIDES**

Persistent and widespread use of herbicides and pesticides can be harmful to humans and wildlife and can runoff into streams and pollute our water supply.

- **REDUCE LAWN AREA, XERISCAPE, AND USE ORGANIC FERTILIZERS**

Reduce your lawn area to only that needed for recreation and walking paths. "Xeriscape" by landscaping with drought-resistant (preferably native) plants and mulching with leaves. These steps will greatly reduce the need for watering outdoors and reduce the runoff from fertilizers and other chemicals used on your lawn. Healthy garden soil with leaf mulch needs little or no fertilizing. But if you have to use fertilizers, organic fertilizers are much preferable and will reduce runoff of artificial fertilizers into lakes and streams.

[Return to Community Church ECO home page](#)

