

# Community Partners for Clean Streams Monthly eMonitor



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Janis A. Bobrin, Drain Commissioner*



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## Up Front

The eMonitor is designed to keep our Partners and friends updated on CPCS, stormwater management issues, provide helpful information to reduce stormwater and nonpoint source pollution, recognize new Partners, highlight upcoming events, and create networking opportunities. We hope you enjoy each edition of the Monthly eMonitor and welcome any comments, concerns, or suggestions.

## Water Conservation

Hot, dry weather is upon us here in Michigan, where water for our landscapes, industrial processes and personal use can become scarce because of possible drought conditions and increased landscape usage. According to the EPA, Americans use 38,530 million gallons of water each day. 57% of that is in the domestic sector.

Conserving water is important not only to be sure there is enough for everyone but also to improve water quality. There are many small steps business and homeowners can take to conserve water, save money and improve overall water quality.

Using water more efficiently reduces the need to draw it from groundwater supplies, alter natural waterbodies for human water uses, and ultimately protects and preserves habitat. Having more water in its natural state is also better for pollution control, recreation and water recharge processes. Recycling water in industrial and commercial environments can prevent pollution from entering local waterways. Excessive water use also increases non-point source pollution in waterways.

Simply by using less, water quality will improve while conserving this essential natural resource for future human and ecological purposes. This issue of the eMonitor explores many ways to conserve water in industrial, commercial and home settings.



## Indoor Water Conservation Tips

There are many small steps you can take in your home to reduce water use and save money in the bargain. According to the EPA, 57% of all water use is in the domestic sector, while 28% is commercial or industrial. This indicates the importance of monitoring water use at your place of business as well as at home. Listed below are a few “easy to do” tips that will help you save money and conserve water indoors.

- Repair those leaky faucets, toilets and shower heads. This can add up to hundreds of gallons of wasted water each month.
- Turn off running water while brushing teeth, shaving, washing dishes or any other activity that requires water.
- A 10 minute shower can use up to 50 gallons of water. Reducing shower time by a few minutes can reduce this number.
- When purchasing new appliances consider buying water efficient models such as dishwashers and washing machines.
- Buy a low flow toilet or add a device to the tank to lower water consumption. This is particularly important in a place of business where restrooms get high usage, since a single flush uses up to six gallons of water.
- Install low-flow faucets and shower heads. Again, this is especially pertinent to public or business facilities with high usage.
- If your water service is an onsite well, listen to determine if the pump kicks on when the water is not in use. If it does, you have a leak.



## Outdoor Water Conservation Tips

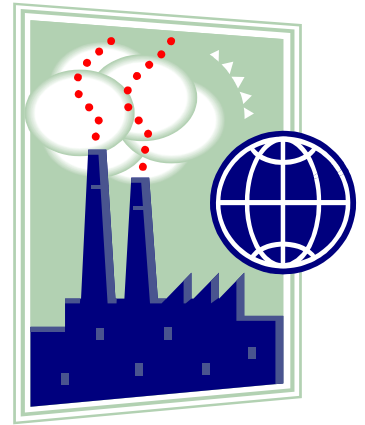
The outdoor urban landscape is one of the largest culprits for water waste. Summer is a crucial time to consider how water can be used more efficiently in and around your landscape. There are many small steps that can be taken to conserve water outdoors at your business and home. The list below contains a few of these tips.



- Check with your community to determine if there are landscape watering restrictions in effect.
- Carefully choose plants and grass types that are suited for your soil, site and climate. Native plants and those adapted to your site will require less maintenance, water and nutrient inputs.
- Lawns are healthiest when they are watered deeply, and less frequently. This assists root health and growth.
- Irrigation systems are time and labor savers, but should be programmed correctly to use only the amount of water needed. Sensors should operate properly to turn off the flow when it is raining. Irrigate in the evening or morning to prevent water evaporation in the midday heat.
- Cover your swimming pool when not in use to reduce evaporation, keep the water clean and avoiding clogging filters with unnecessary debris.
- Install a rain barrel with a secured lid to collect water and use to water your yard and landscape.
- Install a rain garden to absorb stormwater from nearby impervious surfaces.

## Industrial and Commercial Water Conservation

In the industrial and commercial setting, water usage can be an enormous expense. According to the EPA, 28% of all water draws are attributed to industrial and commercial ventures. Water is used in great quantities in many areas of manufacturing. Business owners have found that reusing wastewater can be cost effective. Additionally, due to the large amount of people in commercial and industrial settings, there is typically a large amount of indoor water use at businesses. Employees may not be as sparing about using resources at their place of business than at home.



Here are a few tips for water conservation at your place of business:

- Educate your employees about using water conservatively for the sake of both water quality and your “bottom line”.
- Provide incentives to employees for conserving water and taking steps to protect water quality.
- Post signs in bathrooms, kitchens and other water usage areas reminding employees and customers of the importance of water conservation and pollution prevention. This will remind employees of water saving opportunities, while displaying your commitment to the environment.
- Involve employees in water saving projects such as proposing rain barrels and rain gardens on your site.
- Contact Community Partners for Clean Streams for signs, employee incentive programs and other water quality information to post and share 734-222-6833 or 734-222-6813.
- Monitor water meters and usage to isolate areas that need improvement.
- Consider alternate water usage in manufacturing processes; like reusing waste water to save money and conserve water. See the EPA information in “Additional Resources” below for more details.
- Check with your landscape care company to ensure that landscaping maintenance programs use water efficiently. Contact Community Partners for Clean Streams for more information on sensitive water usage in landscape care.

## Additional Resources

- ▶ The EPA is an excellent source for finding ways to reduce water usage and recycle water in industrial processes. A comprehensive guide to these techniques and ideas can be found at: <http://www.epa.gov/OW/you/intro.html>
- ▶ The Maryland Department of the Environment is an excellent resource for various types of industries and businesses: [http://www.mde.state.md.us/Programs/WaterPrograms/Water\\_Consevation/index.asp](http://www.mde.state.md.us/Programs/WaterPrograms/Water_Consevation/index.asp)
- ▶ Green Biz provides helpful information and other resources for companies committed to the environment: [http://www.greenbiz.com/toolbox/essentials\\_third.cfm?LinkAdvID=4089](http://www.greenbiz.com/toolbox/essentials_third.cfm?LinkAdvID=4089)
- ▶ National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) tip sheet provides information about conserving water in your backyard landscape. <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/feature/backyard/watercon.html>
- ▶ Earth911 has a variety of resources for water conservation and water quality issues, including a great section for kids. <http://www.earth911.org/master.asp?s=lib&a=Water/water.asp>
- ▶ Water, Use It Wisely has many tips for saving water around the house, also with a wonderful section to educate children. <http://www.wateruseitwisely.com/index.shtml>

## [CPCS News](#)

### **New and Renewing Partners**

We would like to welcome and thank our new and renewing Community Partners for this month. Thank you for your continuing commitment to water quality protection!

#### ***Webster Township***



### **Upcoming Events of Interest**

**Native Gardening Workshop:** Presented by Ann Arbor Natural Area Preservation. On September 11, 2006 at Leslie Science Center Nature House at 6:30 to 9:00 pm. There is a \$10 registration fee and space is limited. Call 734-996-3266 for registration and further information.

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### **Community Partners for Clean Streams**

705 N. Zeeb Road, PO Box 8645  
Ann Arbor, MI 48107-8645

Michelle J. Bononi, Senior Environmental Planner (734) 222 – 6833 [bononim@ewashtenaw.org](mailto:bononim@ewashtenaw.org)

Or

Vicki Kalkirtz, Environmental Planning Intern (734) 222 – 6813

[kalkirtz@ewashtenaw.org](mailto:kalkirtz@ewashtenaw.org)

[http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/drain\\_commissioner/dc\\_cpcs.html](http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/drain_commissioner/dc_cpcs.html)

