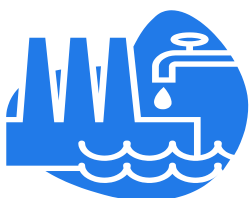


BMP #1

Why Should My School Conserve Water and Prevent Water Pollution?

Conservation

Conserving water saves energy. You save the energy that your water supplier uses to treat and move water to you, and the energy your school uses to heat the water.



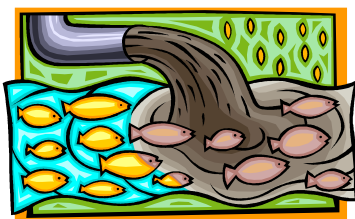
When you conserve water you help preserve drinking water supplies. You ease the burden on wastewater treatment plants—the less water you send down the drain, the less work these plants have to do to make water clean again.

Conserving water saves money. The school pays for the water you use. If you use less water, you'll have more money left to spend on other things.



Pollution Prevention

The water that runs off your schools property runs untreated in your local watershed and then into the Bay.



Nutrients—primarily nitrogen and phosphorus—are some of the pollutants that run off the lawns of our schools. Excessive nitrogen and phosphorus degrade the Bay's water quality. Nitrogen pollution is the most serious pollution problem for the Bay because it causes algae blooms that consume oxygen. The blooms lower dissolved oxygen levels so severely that fish and shellfish die.

Water pollution is one of the main reasons why freshwater resources are constantly in decline (despite being renewable resource), and since only 3% of water on our planet is freshwater world could experience global water shortage much sooner than expected.

Water Vocabulary

- **Buffer**-A naturally vegetated area established or managed to protect aquatic, wetland, shoreline, and terrestrial environments from man made disturbances.
- **Impervious surface**- An area covered with solid material or that is compacted to the point where water can not infiltrate underlying soils (e.g. parking lots, roads, houses, patios, swimming pools, tennis courts, etc.). Stormwater runoff velocity and volume can increase in areas covered by impervious surfaces.
- **Native species**- These are species which were found in the watershed area prior to European settlement.
- **Rain Garden**- Gardens that are designed to handle a specific amount of rainwater runoff from impervious surfaces are termed "rain gardens".
- **Rain Barrels**- Water harvesting in vessels smaller than 250 gallons are considered to be "rain barrels".
- **Stormwater management pond** –holds water after storms to prevent erosion, and improve water quality by allowing sediment to settle.
- **Stormwater run-off**- Water from rainfall, snowmelt, or otherwise discharged that flows across the ground surface instead of infiltrating the ground.
- **Watershed** -The water shed is the land area which drains into a larger water body. Watersheds can be at a micro scale or large scale. Examples of watersheds are the Chesapeake Bay Watershed and the Sligo Creek Watershed. The former is comprised of many smaller watersheds such as the Sligo Creek Watershed.



BMP #1

How Can My School Conserve Water and Prevent Water Pollution?



- Bring a water bottle to school to avoid using a drinking fountain that can use more water than a person drinks.
- Find out if your school uses low-flow or water-reducing devices on faucets and toilets. If your school doesn't use these devices, talk to the person in charge and explain why it's important to use these devices to save water.
- Find out if the plants around your school need to be watered a lot. If they do, find out about alternative plants that can survive with less water (xeriscaping). Talk to your school's parent/teacher organization about helping to replace the plants.
- Add mulch around plants to conserve water.
- Alert the custodian/building engineer of any leaky faucets, drinking fountains or toilets.
- Create posters that teach kids how to conserve water and display them in your school.
- Wash paint brushes in a bucket or ice cream container
- Monitor water use by reading the water meter on Monday mornings and Friday afternoons so you can discover if there are any hidden leaking pipes
- Replace regular taps with taps that turn themselves off.
- Replace single flush toilets with dual flush toilets.
- Adjust the flush valve in toilet cisterns so the minimum amount of water is used for each flush.
- Avoid over watering school gardens by only watering when it's needed.
- Loosen, amend soil to enhance water retention
- Use trigger nozzles on hoses to water only those areas that need it.
- Install a rainwater tank.
- Retrofit parking lots and pathways with pervious pavement
- Create a "no mow" or "no graze" zone along your school-yard.
- Have maintenance staff set mower blades at least three inches high. Taller grass slows runoff, resists drought and requires less fertilizer.
- Cover piles of soil with tarps to protect them from rain.
- Limit your overall use of pesticides and herbicides, and use extreme caution when using them near streams.
- Compost yard waste.
- Plant a Rain Garden.
- Install rain barrels underneath drain spouts.
- Label the Storm Drains in your areas.



Steps You Can Take At Home

Put a jug of water in your toilet bowl to reduce the amount of water you use when flushing.

For more information: http://www.maeoe.org/resources/ee_resources.php

