

Attachment 3

Falls Creek Ranch Water Conservation Tips Updated October 2019

Did You Know?

Falls Creek Ranch utilizes community wells to supply drinking water to all residents. We have two potable water systems (upper and lower Ranch) linked by a transfer line. Our system includes three active wells. We maintain two 60,000-gallon water storage tanks and several miles of underground distribution piping. We have two chlorine disinfection system buildings. An electronic control system (SCADA) monitors the mechanical and electrical components of our system. We have one licensed operator and one official contact of authority. We have a billing system in place for potable water usage by our residents.

Our source of potable water is the Dyke Canyon aquifer which is dependent upon the annual snowpack levels. In recent years, we have seen below normal levels of snowfall due to the ongoing drought affecting all of us in the southwest US. We need to work together to conserve our water resources.

We also have one irrigation water system. This is our lake which has a pump for residents' use. The source of the lake water is the Falls Creek drainage. Anyone with a garden or landscaping can use lake water for irrigation and leave our potable water for home use, especially in the summer when we have a larger number of on-site residents and guests using our water.

This document was prepared by the FCR Utilities Committee to provide some ways that all of us can conserve water. Many are easy and free, and some may require a small investment of time and effort to implement. We hope that our combined voluntary efforts will be adequate to protect our water supplies, but if not the Board may be required to implement more drastic control measures.

Outdoor - Garden/irrigation

- Use lake water for all irrigation. The Ranch provides a pump at the hydrant area of the lake; all you need is a container and a vehicle. And it's free!
- Consider installing a cistern to store irrigation water.
- Apply water during the cool parts of the day, preferably in the morning, to prevent excess evaporation.
- Follow existing FCR irrigation guidelines. Hand-watering or use of a properly installed drip irrigation system is allowed for up to 1,000 square feet only. Sprinklers or soaker hoses of any type are not allowed.
- Postpone any new landscape projects until adequate rainfall occurs.
- Allow grass to go dormant during the hot, dry summer months. Your grass may turn brown in the middle of the summer, but this doesn't mean that the grass is dead. Dormant grass will re-grow when rain and cooler weather return.
- When landscaping, select xeric (drought tolerant, low water usage) sustainable plants. Consider planting native plant materials. Contact the FCR Beautification Committee for planting advice.
- Form ditches or basins around plants to allow water to pond and seep in slowly and to prevent runoff.
- Mulch (away from your home) or gravel landscaped areas to reduce evaporation.

Indoors - What can you do?

The largest water users inside the home are toilets, clothes washers, faucets, and showers. There are many ways we can all conserve water use. Some of these things require changing habits, while others may require an investment in relatively inexpensive equipment. Water consumption can be reduced by 20 to 40 percent without purchasing expensive equipment or being inconvenienced.

Appliances/hardware

- Check for leaks in faucets, toilets, hoses, and pipes. A steady drip can waste hundreds of gallons a day.
- Know where your main water shut-off valve is located in your house. This is important in the event of a burst pipe or major leak in your home.
- You can check for leaks by turning off your main house water valve. Record the reading on your water meter. After an hour, recheck the meter. If the meter reading has changed, you have a leak. Contact the FCR Utilities Committee for instruction on how to check your FCR water meter.
- If you have a toilet more than 15 years old, consider replacing it with a modern low-flow model. These newer versions work just as well as the old ones and use 50-70% less water. Some use as little as 1.2 gallons per flush, while conventional toilets use 5-7 gallons per flush.
- Repairing a leaky faucet can be as simple as changing a washer. A leaking toilet can waste hundreds of gallons of water a day without making a sound. To check the toilet, put enough food coloring into the tank to color the water. If, without flushing, the color appears in the bowl, you have a leak. Adjusting or replacing the ‘flapper valve’ or float arm of the plunger ball often repairs leaky toilets.
- Install water conservation fixtures and appliances such as low-flow showerheads, toilets and washing machines. Modern conservation models can save many gallons versus conventional appliances.
- A flow reducer placed in the water pipe, a low-flow fixture, or an attachment to the existing fixture all can reduce water use.
- Install an aerator on each household faucet. These inexpensive devices are available at hardware stores and result in substantial water savings. Install low-flow showerheads to reduce flow by 50 to 75%. These can be purchased for about \$10 and quickly pay for themselves in water savings.

Change your water use habits. We use a lot of water to cook and prepare food, wash dishes and clothing, and clean. A normal faucet without a flow aerator runs at the rate of 3 to 5 gallons a minute. Normal dishwasher loads require at least 15 gallons of water. **The following ideas can save water in the bathroom, kitchen, laundry.**

Showering

- Avoid running water in the shower while you are shampooing or soaping (also known as a “Navy” shower). Many water-saving showerheads come with a button to shut off the flow without changing the mix of hot and cold water.
- Take shorter showers instead of baths. With a low-flow showerhead, a four-minute shower can use as little as 8 gallons of water, while a full bath uses 50-60 gallons.
- Place a bucket in the shower to catch cool water while you’re waiting for it to warm up. Use that water for your plants.

Toilets

- Follow Keats' advice in "Ode to a Septic Tank": if it's yellow, let it mellow; if it's brown, flush it down.
- Do not use toilets as ashtrays or trash receptacles. Each unnecessary flush wastes 1.2 -7 gallons depending on the kind of toilet.
- Do not dump household hazardous wastes down your toilets or drains. Learn to recognize which household products are hazardous.

Washing

- Turn water off while brushing teeth, shaving, and washing.
- Wash cars in town.

Food preparation

- Wash fruits and vegetables in a bowl of water rather than running the faucet. When done, use the water for plants.

Dishwashing

- When washing dishes by hand, instead of running water continuously, use one basin for washing and another for rinsing. Save this water for houseplants. Use the least amount of detergent possible to avoid having to rinse continuously.
- Don't pre-wash dishes before loading them in the dishwasher. Just scrape off food scraps.
- Run the dishwasher only when full. This usually uses less water than if washing the same number of dishes by hand.
- If you're buying a new dishwasher, consider one that uses less water.

Waste disposal

- Trash your food scraps rather than use the garbage disposal. Disposals use a great deal of water and add unnecessary solids to your septic system.

Drinking Water

- Keep a bottle of drinking water in the refrigerator, instead of running the faucet until the water is cold.
- Consider a bulk bottled drinking water service.
- If you have an RO water system, minimize use during drought times, or at least save backwashed water for other uses. These may use several gallons of water to produce one gallon. FCR's drinking water is excellent quality on its own.

Clothes washing

- Use your washing machine only when full.
- For lightly soiled laundry loads, use the shortest wash cycle.
- If you are purchasing a new washing machine, consider a suds-saver model that reuses water for a second load or another model that uses less water. Consider a front-loading washer instead of the conventional top-loading machine. You could reduce your water use from a high of 60 gallons to only 20 gallons per load.