CITY OF KEENE DROUGHT UPDATE: SEPTEMBER 2016

Your Water Supply - Use What You Need ...But Save the Rest for Later

It's no secret: The Keene area has been in a drought in recent months. And right at the time that it's hottest and driest, that's exactly when people begin to use more water. Currently, the City's water supply is not in danger . However, acting now to preserve water can help ensure a plentiful water supply when extended drought conditions occur.

It also saves you money on your water bill!

"I want to help conserve water, but where do I start?"

First make some easy changes:

- Every time you turn on the tap be conscious of what you're doing. Don't use more than you need.
- Take shorter showers.
- Turn off the water while brushing your teeth, shaving, etc.
- Don't use the toilet as a trash can and flush un-necessarily.
- Only run the dishwasher and laundry with full loads.

On average the City of Keene produces approximately 2.2 million gallons of water per day (mgd). During summer months water use spikes by nearly 20% to approximately 2.6 mgd.

You've done all that? - Time to take the next steps!

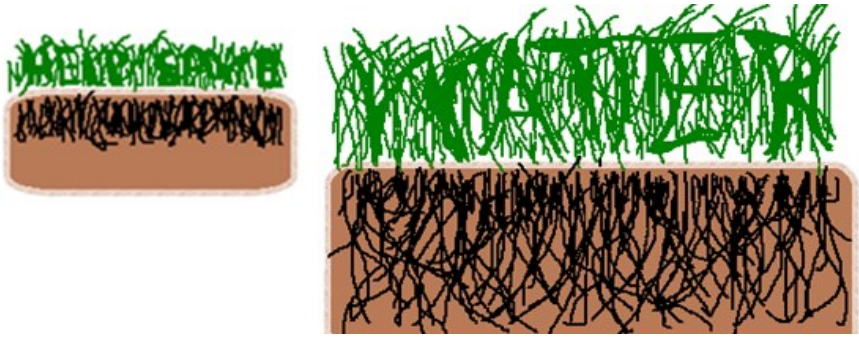
Check for leaks and fix them. A leaky toilet may waste up to 200 gallons per day and that dripping faucet may waste 3,000 gallons per year! Sometimes leaks are not obvious. Your water meter is equipped with a leak indicator which can help you detect a "phantom" leak. If the leak indicator is moving when there's no water being used in the house – you've got a leak!

Install low-flow fixtures. According to the NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES), installation of water efficient showerheads, faucets, toilets, dishwashers and other water-using fixtures can cut indoor water use by up to 35% and save money off of your water and electric bills. Look for the US Environmental Protection Agency's "WaterSense" logo to help identify water efficient products.

More Ways to Save Water...

Adopt water conserving lawn and landscape maintenance practices.

- Use native plants that are adapted to local conditions.
- Leave grass clippings on the lawn as mulch to retain moisture and nutrients.
- Use drought-tolerant grasses.
- Raise the mower blade height to 3". (Here's why) —>
- Water in the evening or early morning to reduce evaporation loss.



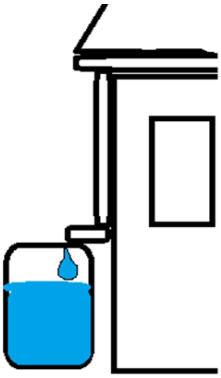
Longer grass encourages deeper root growth, retains moisture and makes the lawn more drought -tolerant.

So how much does it actually cost to water my lawn or garden?

Let's start with the cost of $3.65 per 100 cubic feet of water (= 748 gallons). That's about 0.49 cents/gallon (≅1/2 cent per gallon). Add in the sewer portion of your bill which is $5.69 per 100 cubic feet (≅3/4 cent/gallon). The amount of water going through your hose depends on the water pressure, hose diameter and hose length. Let's assume 40 psi of pressure and 1/2" diameter hose that's 50' long. You would have 12 gal/minute and 720 gal/hour. If you water one hour/week and 13 weeks/quarter during the summer, that adds up to an extra $117 per quarter! Check out an online calculator to figure about how much you could save.

Capture rainwater for irrigation and outdoor water use. ½" of rain falling on a 20' x 30' area of roof can generate almost 200 gallons of rainwater that can be captured and used later when conditions are dryer and your garden or lawn is thirsty.

This downspout drains to a rain barrel. Rainwater is captured and used later when you need it. *Remember to put a screen over the opening to keep mosquitos out!*



For more tips on conserving water, visit

- US EPA Water Sense www.epa.gov/watersense/
- Water Use it Wisely www.wateruseitwisely.com/
- NHDES "We're For Water" Water Conservation http://xml2.des.state.nh.us/NHisForWater/

Remember: individual actions add up to the whole

Your choices can make a difference!

It may seem like a drop in the bucket… but every drop counts

Questions?
Contact the City of Keene Public Works Department
at 603-352-6550 or citreq-dpw@ci.keene.nh.us