

Septic systems and water

For the homeowner who has a septic system, the life of the system could be extended by conserving water, thus reducing pollution due to leaks. The less water flowing through a system, the lower the chances of pollution. Since we are already out in the yard, we can pursue other means to conserve water.

- Don't run the hose while washing your car. Many of us just drive through the car wash, but if you are in a DIY situation, fill a pail with soapy water & use the hose only for rinsing.
- Use a broom for clearing your driveway or sidewalk of leaves, dirt, etc. instead of running the hose
- Cover your pool to avoid evaporation, you could save an extreme amount of water by doing so
- Use hose washers in spigots and hose connections to eliminate leaks

There are many ways to conserve water in your gardens

For the vegetable garden, water early in the day and try not to water when it is windy. Add organic material to your garden to help absorption and water retention. Harvest rainwater by utilizing a rain barrel to catch water from the roof. Plants prefer untreated water, so the garden will be healthier & you will save money on your water bill. For other gardens and the lawn, you can utilize some of the following:

- Choose drought resistant grass when planting a new lawn or doing some re-seeding
- Native plants can be planted on slopes to reduce runoff and they also survive on less water
- Use mulch around trees and shrubs to retain moisture, taking care not to "touch" tree bark with mulch
- Water the lawn only when it needs it and let it grow taller (to 3") which promotes water retention

Now let's go inside

There are numerous ways to conserve water indoors. One of the most effective ways is to upgrade fixtures to those that are energy efficient and help reduce the amount of water used. When replacing a dishwasher or clothes washer, look for those that use less water. There are also water saving toilets. Here are a few tips for further "inside" conservation:

- When showering, take a shorter shower and turn off the water for soaping up and turn back on to rinse
- Install a water-saving "low-flow" showerhead which uses less than 2.5 gallons per minute
- Turn water off after you wet your toothbrush & fill a glass for mouth rinsing
- Fill the sink with warm water for shaving & rinse your razor off in that instead of running water
- When hand washing dishes, don't leave water running for rinsing

Saving water should become a part of everyday family practice and is one of the easiest contributions we can make to our local environment.

Sources:

- [Learn.eartheasy.com](https://www.learn.eartheasy.com) guides: Water Conservation: 45+ ways to conserve water
 - Town of Canandaigua: How to be Water Wise, brochure
 - EPA Water Sense: Simple Steps to Save Water, brochure www.epa.gov/watersense
-

RAIN BARREL “VIDEO”

Due to concerns over COVID-19, the ECB unfortunately had to post-pone the rain barrel workshop that we had scheduled for mid-April. We had hoped to hold an in-person event, but with your safety in mind, we will be offering a virtual rain barrel workshop. For those of you who registered for the workshop originally, we will be contacting you with the video details and when/how to pick-up your pre-built rain barrel at the Ontario County SWCD office. This video will also be posted on the ECB webpage by mid-June.

This virtual event, sponsored by the ECB and the Canandaigua Lake Watershed Association, will feature Alaina Robarge, Ontario County Soil & Water Conservation District, who will present information about rain barrel set-up and maintenance. She will also be presenting on the importance of stormwater management at home as well as healthy lawn tips!

