



Is your home and property climate ready?

Prepare your home and yard for **drought**



When we turn on the tap in Calgary, it may feel like our city will always have an abundant supply of water. In reality, our water supply is finite and increasingly under pressure. Calgary relies solely on the Bow and Elbow watersheds for our source water, which face stressors such as climate change and population growth. Calgary will experience hotter, drier and longer summers, meaning drought conditions may become more common and widespread.

Looking ahead, we all have a part to play in using water wisely. Making water efficiency a way of life will help make drought less disruptive to our homes and businesses. Below are some actions that can help you to create a water efficient home and yard prepared for drought conditions.

Be YardSmart

Create a yard fit for Calgary's climate:



Observe sun exposure and water drainage to choose plants for your yard's unique conditions.



Consider removing lawn where you can and replacing with drought tolerant gardens and ground coverings.



Add a base of at least twenty centimeters (8 inches) of good quality soil for a healthy garden or lawn that retains water.

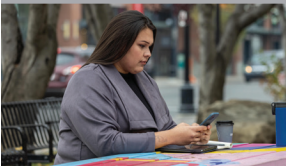


Choose native or drought tolerant perennials and grasses, and hardy trees and shrubs that thrive in Calgary.



Add mulch around trees and shrubs to retain moisture and keep an even soil temperature.

Use water outdoors as efficiently as possible:



Watch the forecast and skip watering when it has rained or is forecast to rain.



Water when it's coolest – early in the morning or later in the evening.



Water low and slow – use a soaker hose, watering can or drip irrigation for your garden.



Capture and use free rainwater collected in a rain barrel(s).



Only give plants the water they need. Read plant tags to know how much to water your garden.

Other actions that save water outdoors:



Irrigation systems are one of the most common household leaks. Schedule annual maintenance with an irrigation professional and check often for leaks.



Do not mow your lawn too short. Keep it 5 to 7 cm (2 to 3 inches) high to shade the soil.



Sweep your sidewalk and driveway rather than washing with water.



Use a downspout extender to direct runoff away from hard surfaces and into landscaped areas of your property, such as rain gardens.



Drain your irrigation system before it freezes in the Fall.

Did you know, water use in Calgary communities increases an average of 20 per cent in the summer months? In hot and dry weather, Calgarians tend to use more water outdoors which can put pressure on our rivers and water treatment plants.

Use water wisely indoors

Avoid wasteful household leaks:



Check your toilets for leaks by putting a few drops of food colouring in the tank. If water in bowl changes colour after 15 minutes you have a leak.



Use your water meter to check for other leaks inside your home every six months as part of regular home maintenance.



Fix any leaking toilets, taps, showerheads, and any other water using devices.



Service your furnace humidifier, water softener and hot water tank regularly.



If you have travel plans, consider asking someone to check on your home while you're away.

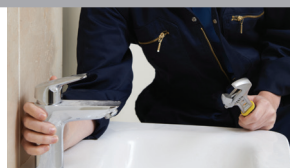
Install high-efficiency appliances and fixtures:



Install high-efficiency toilets and faucets.



Replace showerheads with low-flow models.



Install 3.8 litres per minute faucet aerators on all bathroom sink faucets.



Replace your old dishwasher with a low water use dishwasher. Newer models will save on your energy bill as well.



Replace your old washer with a low water use washer. Consider buying a front-load washer. They use at least 50% less water than older top-load models.

Other actions that save water indoors:



Take short showers. A five-minute shower with an old showerhead can easily use 75 litres of water.



Fill the tub to only halfway when bathing children.



Use your dishwasher only when you have a full load or run it on a shorter cycle if you must run it when not completely full.



Wash only full loads of laundry. Set the water-level appropriately if you must wash a small load of laundry.



Place vegetables and fruit in a partially filled sink or pot, then rinse them.

For more information on indoor and outdoor water efficiency visit calgary.ca/waterguide



Check out calgary.ca/climate-ready-home to learn more about reducing climate change risk at home.