

March 2010 EnergyWiseSM Tip: “Conserving (hot) water is EnergyWise”.

As a necessary component of life, water is undeniably a precious resource. As a primarily agricultural-based state, water is especially important to the quality of life in Nebraska, and all Nebraskans have a responsibility to use it wisely.

Whether heating it for domestic use or moving it to irrigate crops or water lawns, using water takes energy. Generally, these are three places Nebraskans have an opportunity to conserve water, use energy efficiently, and save money in the process: At home, in the yard and in the field.

At Home

Many opportunities to conserve water and energy (and save money) exist in the average home in Nebraska, especially if you require warm or hot water. Any water savings is beneficial, and after a look at the following data, a pair of water- and energy-saving devices will clearly benefit the home: low-flow showerheads and a high-efficiency clothes washer.

Activity	Gallons per Use	Activity	Gallons per Use
Clothes washing Conventional Washer	33 gallons	Automatic dishwashing	12 gallons
Clothes washing Front Loading	15 gallons	Preparing food	5 gallons
Conventional Shower Head	2.5 gallons per minute	Bathing	20 gallons
Low Flow Shower head	2.0 gallons per minute or less	Hand dishwashing	4 gallons

In the Yard

Overwatering lawns accounts for the waste of millions of gallons each year in Nebraska. Make sure water is applied efficiently to your lawn. Don't allow your automatic sprinkler system, if applicable, to operate immediately before, after or during rain. Be sure to water your lawn early in the morning before evaporation from the mid-day sun and increased wind makes your efforts to get water to your thirsty lawn less efficient.

In the field

Technological advances in agriculture in the last decade or so have taken great steps forward in water and energy conservation. It's a proven fact: Center pivot irrigation systems with low-pressure sprinklers lose less water to evaporation while precisely irrigating crops than out-dated high-pressure systems lose. Another advance – center pivots with drop sprinkler heads – only need to apply about half as much water as traditional gravity-flow irrigation systems to sufficiently irrigate crops.

For more information on steps you can take to conserve water and improve your energy efficiency, contact your local public power utility. Lots of useful energy efficiency information is also available at <http://www.nppd.com>.

Your public power electric utility wants you to get the most energy value for your money. It costs far less to save energy than it does to build a new power plant to generate additional power.