

Water Conservation during times of drought: What can homeowners do?

According to the guidelines devised by the RI Water Resources Board, Rhode Island is under a "Drought Watch". Here at the North Kingstown Department of Water Supply we are doing all we can to keep an eye on the situation locally; including monitoring ground water and surface water levels and using this, and other data, to run our nine active wells in an efficient manner that protects the aquifers we rely upon. You, the water users, are already actively working to protect our precious water resources by complying with the town's mandatory odd-even outside watering program. As the summer (our peak water demand period) and the drought conditions progress, we at NK Water, will periodically offer some suggestions that will both, help to conserve our water resources and save you money on your water bill. This being the beginning of peak period of outside water usage its appropriate to take a look at water conservation tips appropriate for these activities. So, with a tip of the hat to that "Late Nite" fellow, here's the North Kingstown Department Of Water Supply's Top Ten outside water use tips:

- 1) Sweep the sidewalks and driveways, hosing them down not only wastes water, it may wash auto-related contaminants into your lawn or garden.
- 2) Water your lawn sparingly and wisely. Position sprinklers so you are, in fact, watering the grass not the street. Water early in the day or early in the evening to minimize evaporation.
- 3) Avoid the tendency to over water, you only set up your lawn for failure. Over watering inhibits extensive root development and will actually contribute to lawn failure should you miss a day or two.
- 4) Use moisture-retaining mulches in your gardens and around your landscaped areas.
- 5) When re-landscaping choose drought tolerant plantings.
- 6) If you have an automatic sprinkler system remember to program it to reflect odd/even watering restrictions. Check your sprinkler heads to insure they are aimed properly. Don't "automatically" water your road or walkway.
- 7) Those "old-timers" knew what they were doing. Try an old-fashioned rain barrel under your down spouts. The collected water can be used to water gardens.
- 8) If you have a pool, buy a solar cover. Not only will your water be warmer, you will minimize evaporation and have to refill it less frequently.
- 9) Turn off the hose when soaping up the car during a wash.
- 10) Don't get in the habit of leaving your outside faucet on and controlling flow with your hose nozzle. A hose leak or blowout overnight or while you are away will cost you hundreds of gallons and may flood your basement.

