

California may no longer be in a drought (for now), but we still have three primary goals to make water conservation a way of life: First, use water more wisely. Second, eliminate water waste, and third, strengthen local drought resiliency. It's important that Healdsburg continues to adapt for more efficient water uses as climate change continues to impact our natural-water resources.

Use water more wisely.

Nearly 70 percent of Healdsburg's water use is residential. In winter months, residential average water usage is 59 gallons per capita daily. In the summer, that number rises to 139 gallons per capita daily. That's a whopping 136 percent increase in the summer.

What accounts for this huge jump in water use? Landscaping and irrigation is the major contributor in the summer months. While landscaping provides benefits, such as community beautification, carbon sequestration, and urban heat-island mitigation, your lawn and gardens should be maintained in a way that is water wise.

Planting drought-tolerant native plants and non-turf landscapes cuts down much of your yard's thirst. Native plants are more hardy, requiring less maintenance and fewer resources. As an incentive, we offer a rebate of \$1 for every square foot of existing turf, such as grass, that you change to low- and no-water landscaping. In 2017 and 2018, forty-three Healdsburg residents and two businesses converted 1.55 acres (67,800 sq. ft.) through the lawn-conversion rebate program. That's \$67,800 in rebates for these residents and businesses. To learn more about this rebate program and to apply, go to:

<https://www.ci.healdsburg.ca.us/723/Water-Rebates>

Eliminate Water Waste

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the water leaks in the average U.S. household accounts for nearly 10,000 gallons of water wasted annually. Common leaks are found in irrigation, toilets, faucets, and other valves. Repairing leaks will reduce water waste, and save money on your water-utility bill.

Check for leaks in your irrigation system regularly. Faulty sprinkler heads or soggy patches from drip irrigation can be expensive as well as detrimental to plants. If you repair a leak in your water system, the City's Utility Billing Department will provide a leak-adjustment credit as an incentive and reward for your quick repair of leaks. Go here to learn how to read your water meter and detect leaks:

<https://www.ci.healdsburg.ca.us/862/Water-Leaks-and-High-Bills>

Detect and fix bathroom and kitchen water leaks. If your sink or bathtub faucets leak just one drip per second, you could waste more than 3,000 gallons per year. Check for leaks by examining the washers and gaskets for wear and replace them as needed.

Strengthen Local Drought Resiliency

One of the major lessons we learned from the historic 2012-2016 drought was the need for on-going drought resiliency. In 2014, the City of Healdsburg implemented effective measures such as restricting irrigation to certain days and times to minimize the impacts of drought with widespread participation

from the community. The City reduced water usage by 35 percent in 2016 compared to 2013. Making conservation a way of life helps to ensure that we preserve our water supply and mitigate the need for extreme measures.

In addition to continuously promoting water conservation and providing financial incentives to do so, the Utility Department works to offset the demand of potable water. The City's Wastewater Treatment Plant produces high-quality recycled water by way of a rigorous tertiary-treated process. Recycled water is a local, reliable, and safe water supply that reduces the need to develop new freshwater supply sources. Our recycled water is used for beneficial, non-potable purposes, such as vineyard irrigation. In 2018, we distributed 24 million gallons of recycled water to offset demands on potable water.

For more resource-conservation tips and news, please visit our Electric, Water and Wastewater Department webpages at <https://www.ci.healdsburg.ca.us/303/Electric-Water-Wastewater-Department>. In addition, follow Smart Living Healdsburg on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/SmartLivingHealdsburg> for information on the City's conservation programs and rebates.