

King County Announces 'Best Workplaces for Recycling'

King County's Solid Waste Division has named 50 local companies to the "Best Workplaces for Recycling" list. These businesses are being recognized for strong internal recycling programs and for their commitment to making recycling a priority for their companies.

King County has been working on an educational campaign to encourage business and residences to reduce waste and recycle more. In the second year of the program, the number of businesses and organizations awarded the title of Best Workplaces for Recycling has more than doubled, from twenty-one to fifty. These workplaces demonstrated the very best



recycling programs. The list of 50 companies includes Coca-Cola, Google, Ikea, Microsoft, and Northshore Utility District.

Northshore Utility District has been recognized by King County as one of the 50 Best Workplaces for Recycling within the county. This recycling program which includes all employees, is led by our Fleet and Facilities Department. They recycle everything from batteries, light bulbs, and motor oil, to the usual cans, bottles, and cardboard. Our staff takes pride in this program and their efforts have directly

resulted in this prestigious honor. To learn more about recycling programs, visit www.metrokc.gov/recyclemore. ♦

Be Climate Smart In Your Garden This Fall!



Most people know that using compost and mulch in their garden allows the soil to retain more water and reduce irrigation needs. But did you know that compost and mulch also helps your soil store more carbon from the atmosphere and reduce greenhouse gas emissions?

Follow these simple steps this fall for a healthier, more beautiful garden - that is climate smart!

- Build healthy soils by mixing 2 to 4 inches of compost into the upper 8 inches of soil when planting, or rake 1/4 inch of compost into existing lawns.

- Use compost as "mulch" by spreading a 1 to 2 inch layer around plants and trees to fertilize the soil and help hold moisture.
- Choose the right plant for the right place in your garden - your plants will flourish naturally with less water and chemicals.

To learn more, visit www.savingwater.org (click on "Conserve Outside") or call the Garden Hotline at 206-633-0224. ♦



Credit Cards Usage Update



NUD has been accepting Visa, Mastercard and Debit card payments for the past 12 months. The total monthly usage for these transactions, on the website and in the office, averages approximately 807 transactions per month. You may use your credit cards to pay your utility bills only, online through our website at www.nud.net, or in person at the District office. For more information please call the District office at 425-398-4400. ♦

Low-Cost Ways to Conserve Water at Home

If you live in an area where water shortages are not an issue, consider yourself lucky. Predictions indicate that within 5 years, at least 36 States will face water shortages due to a combination of rising temperatures, drought, population growth, and waste.

But there is hope - research has shown that residential water use could be reduced by as much as 50% through efficiency. Here are a few simple, low-cost suggestions for reducing your family's water consumption.

Reduce water use from showers and faucets

The bathroom is where 75% of indoor water consumption occurs. Seem impossible? Consider this: The average 6-minute shower uses about 20 gallons of water.

Reduce this amount with the following tips:

No cost: Limit shower time to 5 minutes or less.

Less than \$10: Install an on/off valve between the shower arm and showerhead. This temporarily shuts off the flow while maintaining the temperature, and can be a useful water-saver while soaping up or shaving.

\$10-\$50: Install a low-flow (less than 2 gallons per minute) showerhead.

\$20-\$50: Insulate accessible hot-water pipes, especially those within 3-feet of the water heater. You'll get hot water faster, avoid wasting H₂O while it heats up, and save energy.

Finally, fit all household faucets with low-flow aerators (less than 2 gallons per minute). This is the best in-home water conservation method and it's also the cheapest.

Toilets are the enemy

Each day, the U.S. uses 5.8 billion gallons of fresh water to flush waste. Check out options with either a very low (less than 1.6) gallon per flush (gpf) rating, or dual flush controls.

New technology provides 2 buttons for flushing: One at 1.6 gpf for solid waste, and another at only 0.8 gpf for liquids. These double-duty flushers can reduce water usage by up to 67% compared with traditional toilets.

Feeling even earthier? Go for a waterless composting toilet and be the envy of all your neighbors. And if you haven't budgeted for a new toilet, try these quick fixes:

Check for leaks: Put a little food coloring in your toilet tank. If the color begins to appear in the bowl, you have a leak that should be repaired.

Displace water: Most older toilets don't require nearly as much water as they use (3.5-5 gallons) to flush properly. To "trick" your toilet into using less water, place a half-gallon plastic bottle inside your toilet tank, weighed down with sand or pebbles, to displace water volume. (Be sure at least

2.5 gallons of water remain in the tank so it will flush properly.) This simple retrofit could save a three-person family 225 gallons of water per month! Not a do-it-yourselfer? For only a few dollars, you can purchase a prepared toilet bag designed to displace 0.8 gallons of water with every flush.

Minimize appliance water consumption

Outside the bathroom, most water is used to wash clothes and dishes. Keep these tips in mind while tackling daily chores:

Fully loaded: Dishwashers and clothes washers should be operated when full for optimum water conservation. If you must wash partial loads, adjust the water levels accordingly.

Pass on permanent press: Avoid the permanent press cycle when washing clothes, which uses an additional 5 gallons for the extra rinse.

The dishwasher is your friend: Even older dishwashers don't use as much water per dish as hand-washing. Newer, more efficient dishwashers use only 1/6 of the water used during hand-washing, and save 230 hours of your time each year.

Scrape, don't rinse: Pre-rinsing dishes before loading the dishwasher is unnecessary. Scrape off food and then trust the machine to do its job.

Upgrade your equipment: Consider buying a water-saving front-loading clothes washer, or a top-loading one with no central agitator. Check ENERGY STAR for ideas and ratings. ♦

By Kendra Tupper, a consultant with the Energy & Resources Team at Rocky Mountain Institute.



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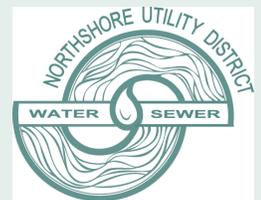
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District Office
P.O. Box 82489
6830 NE 185th St.
Kenmore, WA 98028

P. 425.398.4400
F. 425.398.4430

www.nud.net