

Water & your garden

Did you know that the average daily water consumption per person in Ireland is over 148 litres? That's enough water to fill almost 2 baths. As our country grows and develops, there is a growing demand on our water supply. In order for us all to enjoy our reserves we need to be more aware of water conservation, particularly in our gardens during the summer months.

Tips to Conserve Water in your Garden this summer:

1. **Don't Hose that Path.**
Paths, patios and driveways must never be hosed as this wastes water. Use a yard brush, a rake or an outdoor blower for cleaning.
2. **Collect Rainwater** in a water butt fed from your gutters but always make sure to securely cover large containers for safety. Never use a sprinkler system in your garden.
3. **Watering Cans.**
If you have to water plants do so in the early morning or evening when it is cooler. Always use a watering can.
4. **Reuse Water.**
Use a basin in your sink to collect and reuse water for your garden plants.
5. **Mulches** such as wood chips, bark or gravel will help prevent water evaporation and will suppress weed growth saving water and time weeding.
6. **Grass** can survive for long periods without water and will quickly recover when the next rain showers arrive. Raising the lawnmower blades to a higher level will help stop the grass from scorching in warm weather. Leaving the clippings on the lawn will protect the roots and returns nutrients to the soil.
7. **Spot those Leaks.**
Regularly check your outdoor taps, pipes and plumbing fixtures for leaks.
8. **Trees, Shrubs and Plants.**
Plant flowers and shrubs that like warm and dry conditions. Established trees and shrubs do not need to be watered.
9. **Compost** provides valuable nutrients and keeps the soil moist.

If you would like to find out more about water conservation or home composting, why not come along to one of the free workshops that Waterford City Council is running as part of Bealtaine? These will take place in Central Library at 10.30am on Friday 27th May and in Ardkeen Library at 3pm on Tuesday 31st May 2011 as part of Bealtaine. If you would like to attend one of these workshops, simply contact Central Library on 849975 or Ardkeen Library on 849755.

Compiled by Environmental Services, Waterford City Council. For further information, contact Ella Ryan, Environment Awareness Officer, Menapia Building, The Mall, Waterford. Telephone: 051 849938. Website: www.waterfordcity.ie