



Next Generation Green Schools Program

Water Wise Action Guide

Action Steps and Resources for Our Environment

Water is essential for life. It makes up about 70% of the Earth's surface and our bodies. However, only a very small amount (less than 1%) of the Earth's water is fresh water available for use by humans. Guess what? Water never disappears, it just keeps circulating. The water we use today is the same water the dinosaurs drank! The water in our bodies is billions of years old and has been recycled millions of times. Since water is so important, and "new" water can't be created, we need to be extra careful to keep the water we have clean and to use it wisely.

We can make a difference! We can encourage people and companies not to pollute our precious water. And we can conserve water - we can use less at home, at school and at work by doing easy things like turning the water off when we brush our teeth (check out the checklist on the back of this page).

When working for a more sustainable world, we always keep in mind the 3 R's:

Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle

- **"Reduce"** means using less water and energy and buying less stuff. Also, the less we throw away, the less garbage we have to pollute our water.
- **"Reuse"** means using things over again. It takes a lot of water and energy to make new stuff. Many things can be used more than once, like glass jars or plastic bags. That way we don't have to buy something new or throw anything away.
- **"Recycle"** means turning waste materials into brand new products. This takes less water and energy than making things from raw materials. Don't forget to buy recycled products too!
- Sometimes we add a 4th R - **Rot!** This means creating healthy, organic soil from the food scraps you would otherwise throw away by composting them in a compost pile or worm bin.

Young people are making a difference for our environment by taking action on issues like water!

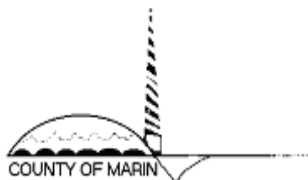
You can too. For help and ideas, contact Next Generation at 415.459.6398 or

rebecca@gonextgeneration.org, and talk to Green Schools Program Partners including:

- Marin Municipal Water District - www.marinwater.org
- North Marin Water District - www.nmwd.com



MARIN MUNICIPAL
WATER DISTRICT



COUNTY OF MARIN



MARIN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION



CONSERVATION - OUR EARTH, OUR MISSION, OUR JOB

Autodesk



GREENLIGHT
SOLAR

Pacific Sun



ORGANIC



Bank of Marin



Good Earth
Natural Foods



MARIN COUNTY STORMWATER
POLLUTION PREVENTION PROGRAM



NORTH MARIN
WATER DISTRICT



TamalpaisBank



three twins
ice cream

12 Easy Things YOU Can Do To Be Water Wise!

A guide to helping your family, your community, and our planet

So how can you be water wise? You can save water by conserving it, which means using just what you need, and by using it more efficiently. This way you're helping to use less of our limited supply of fresh water and being kinder to our environment. You're saving your parents money on water bills too! We can also keep our water clean by not polluting it and not littering. Every time we take simple actions now, they add up to big results later.

- **TURN OFF THE FAUCET** all the way when you are done using it, and while you are doing things like brushing your teeth or washing dishes.
- **SHOWER SHORTER.** Even a few minutes less makes a big difference in terms of how much water and energy you can save.
- **FIX LEAKS.** Ask your parents to fix leaky faucets, showerheads, and toilets.
- **ASK YOUR PARENTS TO INSTALL LOW FLOW** toilets, showerheads, and water faucets. They can save money and help the earth.
- **FILL 'ER UP!** Run full loads in your washing machine and dishwasher. Do less laundry. If it's not dirty, don't wash it!
- **BE A WATER-SMART CAR WASHER.** Take your car to the car wash (where they use recycled water). If at home, always use biodegradable soap and don't keep the hose running.
- **USE A BROOM RATHER THAN A HOSE** to clean sidewalks and driveways.
- **ONLY FLUSH TOILET WHEN NEEDED.** Dispose of tissues and other waste in the trash.
- **DON'T POUR CLEANERS, PAINT, OR CHEMICALS DOWN THE DRAINS** and use eco-friendly, non-toxic alternatives.
- **KEEP THE BAY CLEAN.** Never put anything but clean water into a gutter, open drainage ditch, or down a storm drain. These all lead to our creeks, the bay, and eventually ocean, with no water quality treatment along the way.
- **CLEAN IT UP!** Don't litter and pick up litter when you see it. Join in park, creek, river, and beach cleanups. You can participate in a MMWD volunteer day (www.marinwater.org).
- **PROPERLY DISPOSE OF BATTERIES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES** which can leak hazardous chemicals into the water supply if put in a landfill.

Everything Starts With Water!

Clean, adequate supplies of water are essential for us and for every living thing on Earth. You can make a big difference by changing your behaviors, making changes at home, and encouraging schools, companies and towns to pollute less and conserve more. **To be efficient is to be smart!** www.gonextgeneration.org

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