



# North Oaks Conservation Award

## Water Conservation Best Practices

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Water is essential for life and plays a vital role in the proper functioning of the Earth's ecosystems. Our water supply is threatened by pollution, invasive species, and overuse, which may have a serious impact on all living creatures and can have a negative effect on the use of water for drinking, household needs, and recreation. Overuse is a major concern as shown by the fact that the Prairie du Chien aquifer has decreased an average of 3.5 inches per year or a total of 70 inches since 1995, according to data from DNR observation wells. The majority of wells in North Oaks are in this aquifer. The following Best Practices are recommended to conserve our water resources and may qualify for a conservation award.

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### Best Practices for Water Conservation - Ideas

- Visit websites such as [wateruseitwisely.com](http://wateruseitwisely.com) which list dozens of ways to reduce water use.
- Check water bills for any instances of high water use, as this may be an indication of a leak.
- When doing laundry or using a dishwasher, always wash full loads.
- Use garbage disposal sparingly and compost vegetable food waste.
- Collect the water you use to rinse fruit and vegetables and use it to water plants.
- While running water to heat it up, collect the water and use it to water plants.
- When it is time to replace appliances that use water, choose high efficiency models.
- Find and fix any leaking faucets.
- Test your toilet for leaks once a year by putting food coloring in the tank. If it seeps into the bowl there is a leak.
- Replace showerheads that have a flow rate greater than 2.5 gallons per minute (the current national energy policy act standard).
- Take shorter showers. Reducing shower length by a minute or two can save 150 gallons a month.
- If an irrigation system is used, make sure that it has a weather based SMART irrigation controller with a rain sensor that is properly set up and maintained.
- Water grass in the morning to prevent water loss through evaporation.
- Sweep outdoor surfaces with a broom instead of using a hose.
- Wash vehicles at a carwash that recycles its water.

More information can be found on the Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization (VLAWMO) website at [vlawmo.org](http://vlawmo.org).