

New/Updated Water Conservation and Drought Outreach Materials



Massachusetts Water Resources Commission
April 13, 2023



LEVEL 1 - MILD DROUGHT



LEVEL 1
Mild Drought



LEVEL 2
Significant Drought



LEVEL 3
Critical Drought



LEVEL 4
Emergency Drought

What does this mean?



Rain below normal for at least 2 months



River and stream flows begin to decline



Gardens begin to wilt

Act Now!



RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES:



Upgrade to efficient toilets, faucets, and showers.



Limit outdoor watering to one day a week (only from 5:00 pm – 9:00 am).

GET A
DROUGHT
UPDATE AT



[MASS.GOV/MA-DROUGHT-MANAGEMENT](https://mass.gov/ma-drought-management)

LEVEL 2 - SIGNIFICANT DROUGHT



LEVEL 1
Mild Drought



LEVEL 2
Significant Drought



LEVEL 3
Critical Drought



LEVEL 4
Emergency Drought

What does this mean?



Rain below normal for over 2 months



Streams and ground water low, nearing very low flows in some areas



Fire danger steadily increasing



Strain on some water supplies

Act Now!

RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES:



Minimize overall water use.



Limit outdoor watering to hoses/watering cans and only after 5pm and before 9am.



Limit installation of new landscapes.

GET A
DROUGHT
UPDATE AT



[MASS.GOV/MA-DROUGHT-MANAGEMENT](https://mass.gov/ma-drought-management)

LEVEL 3 - CRITICAL DROUGHT



LEVEL 1
Mild Drought



LEVEL 2
Significant Drought



LEVEL 3
Critical Drought



LEVEL 4
Emergency Drought

What does this mean?



Rain much below normal for several months



Streams and groundwater very low, record low flows in some areas



Drought-induced Fire potential steadily increasing



Potential water supply constraints, risk to fire protection



Fish and wildlife impacts

Act Now!

RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES:



Minimize overall water use.



Stop all non-essential outdoor watering.

GET A DROUGHT UPDATE AT



[MASS.GOV/MA-DROUGHT-MANAGEMENT](https://www.mass.gov/ma-drought-management)

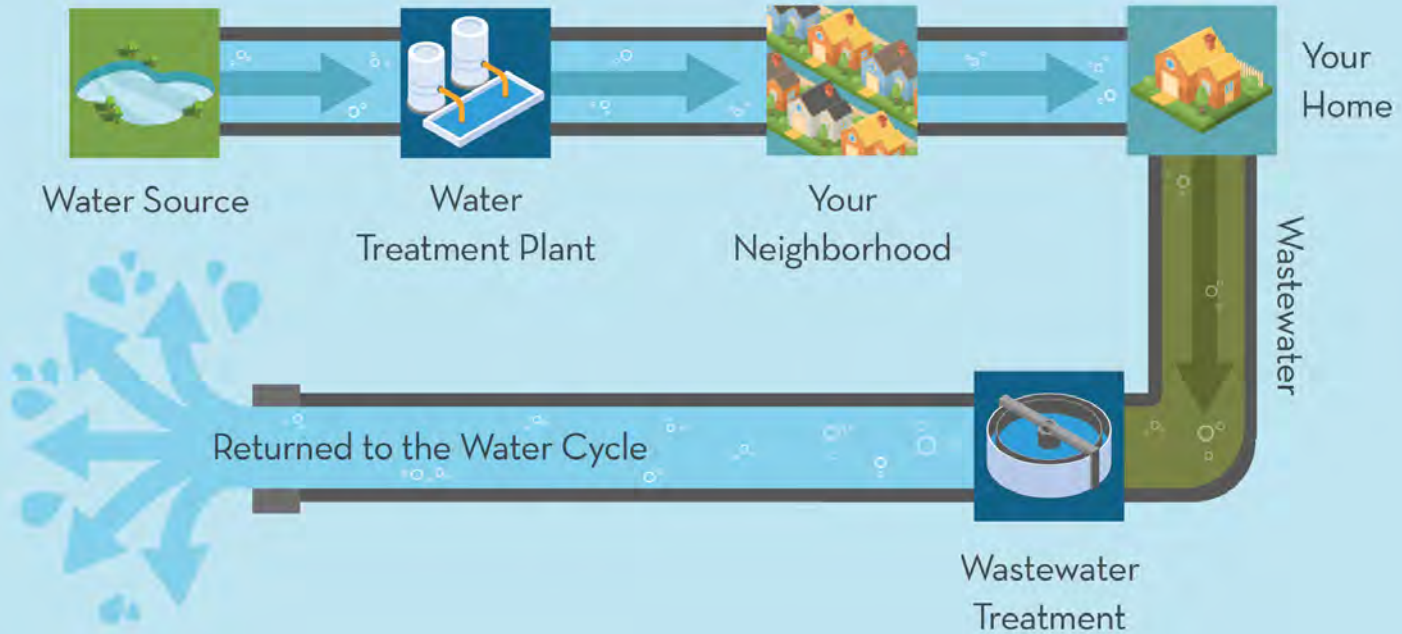


What we really **pay** for
when we pay for **water**.



Pipes

Water's long journey.





What we really **pay** for
when we pay for **water**.



Power

Water systems use lots of energy.



Operating
Pumps



Buildings
& Lighting



Treatment
Processes

Your local water supplier has to
pay a utility bill every month.



Utility bill

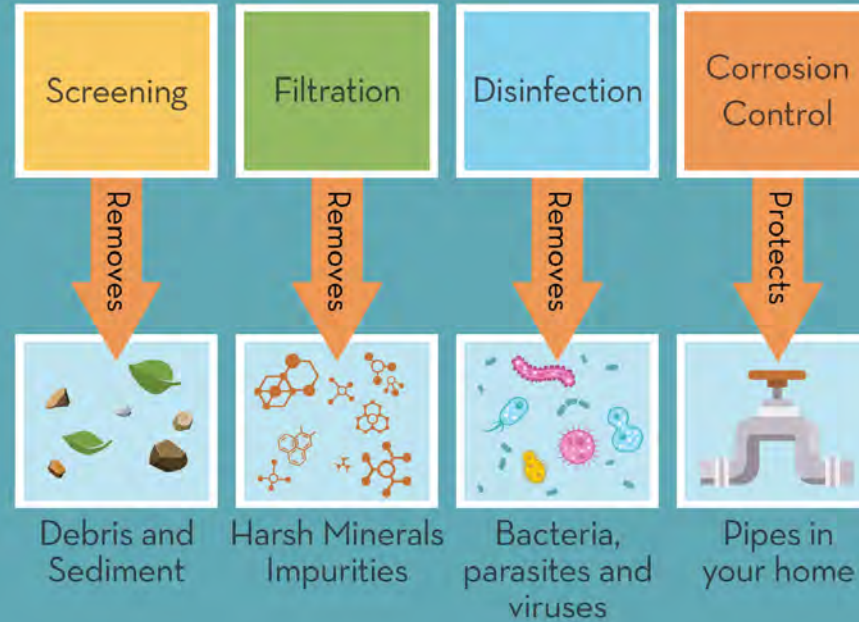


What we really **pay** for when we pay for **water**.



Processes

Common treatment technologies ensure clean, healthy water.





What we really **pay** for
when we pay for **water**.



People

Who really brings water to life?

System Engineers

Administration

Licensed Water Operators

Field Repair & Maintenance Teams



These team members work night
and day to keep your water running!

[MASS.GOV/CONSERVEMAWATER](https://mass.gov/conservemawater)



WATER SAVER TIP

FIND AND FIX LEAKY FAUCETS AND TOILETS

Leaking toilets can waste thousands of gallons of water per month, and the leaks are often silent and hard to see. Use a dye test if you suspect that your toilet might have a leak.

*To check for slower leaks, wait overnight



[MASS.GOV/CONSERVEMAWATER](https://mass.gov/conservemawater)

HOW TO FIND A LEAK



STEP 1

Open the toilet tank

STEP 2

Release dye tablet or 5 drops of food coloring.

STEP 3

Don't use the toilet for 15-20* minutes. Check toilet bowl for any signs of the dye.



* To check for slower leaks, wait overnight

IF YOU SEE COLOR, YOU HAVE A LEAK!

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WATER SAVER TIP

CAR WASHES HELP CONSERVE WATER!

Go to a car wash instead of using your hose to clean your car. Most car wash facilities recycle their water.



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WATER SAVER TIP

WASHING THE CAR YOURSELF

To conserve water, first soap it up using a bucket of water, biodegradable detergent and sponge. Then turn the hose on and quickly rinse it clean. Better yet, take it to a car wash that recycles its water.



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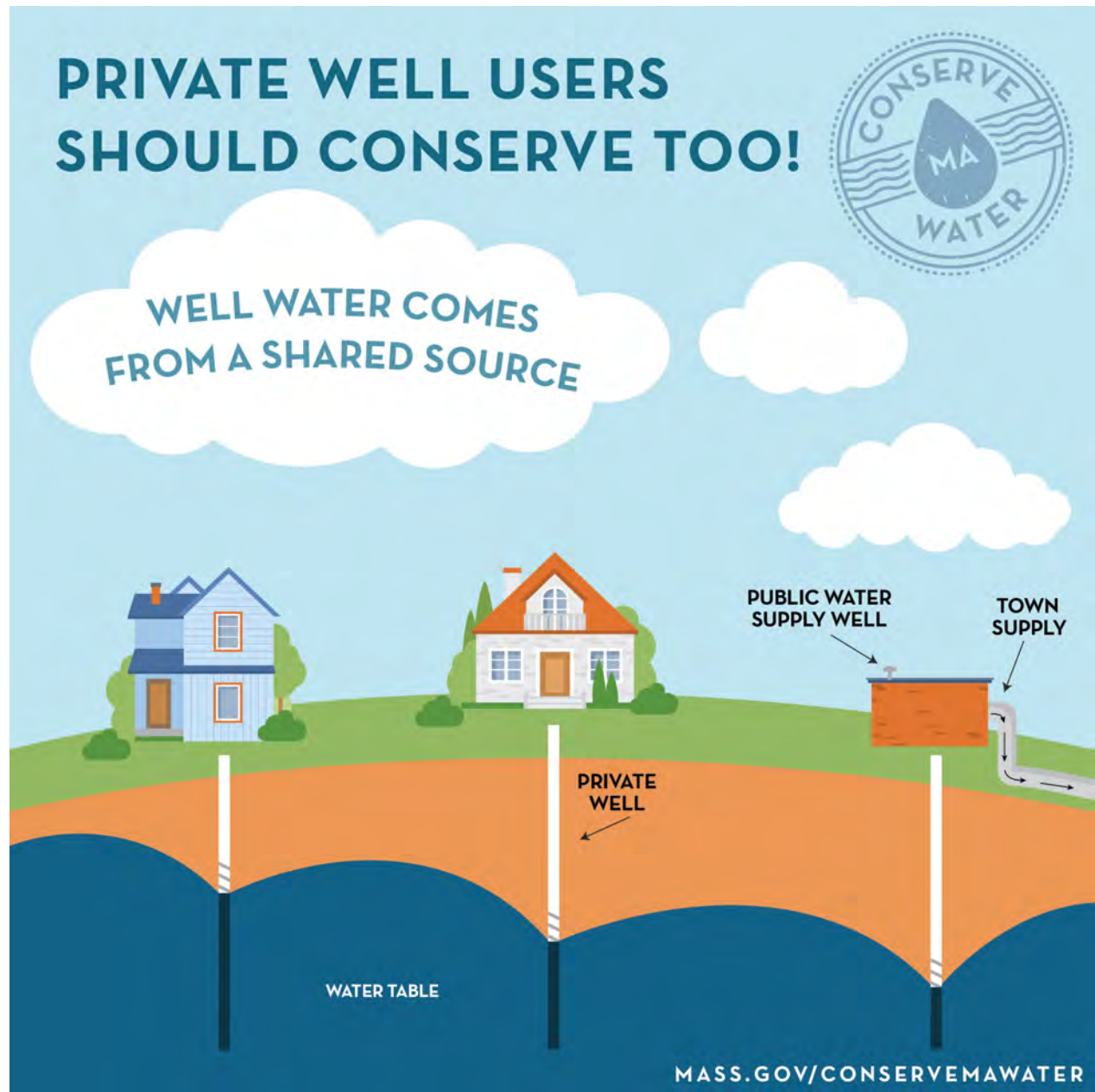


WATER SAVER TIP

SWITCH TO MORE WATER-EFFICIENT APPLIANCES

When buying a new washer, look for the most water efficient model. Newer models require just 7-15 gallons per load.

MASS.GOV/CONSERVEMAWATER



PRIVATE WELL USERS SHOULD CONSERVE TOO!

WELL WATER COMES FROM A SHARED SOURCE



PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY WELL

TOWN SUPPLY

PRIVATE WELL

WATER TABLE

MASS.GOV/CONSERVEMAWATER



WATER SAVER TIP

CHECK FOR OUTDOOR LEAKS

Check for and repair leaks on garden hoses and other watering devices to ensure water is used efficiently.



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CONSIDER
USING A **POOL
COVER** TO PREVENT
WATER LOSS FROM
EVAPORATION ON
HOT SUMMER
DAYS



[MASS.GOV/CONSERVEMAWATER](https://www.mass.gov/conservemawater)



WATER SAVER TIP

PLANT A DROUGHT TOLERANT LAWN

Clover and certain varieties of grass, especially fescues, don't require as much supplemental water once they are established.

[MASS.GOV/CONSERVEMAWATER](https://mass.gov/conservemawater)



WATER SAVER TIP

USE DRIP HOSES

Drip hoses are a more efficient irrigation option than sprinklers or sprayers. Water slowly seeps out of tiny holes and soaks directly into the soil - virtually eliminating wasteful evaporation.

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WATER SAVER TIP

BE GREEN, GO GOLD

When well-established lawns turn golden brown, they're not dead. They've gone dormant and will green up again when it rains. This actually deepens the roots and makes the lawn more drought tolerant.



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WATER SAVER TIP

GO GOLD

During dry periods, let your lawn go golden, making it more resilient to drought. It will green back up when rain returns!



[MASS.GOV/CONSERVEMAWATER](https://mass.gov/conservemawater)



WATER SAVER TIP

REDUCE YOUR LAWN SIZE

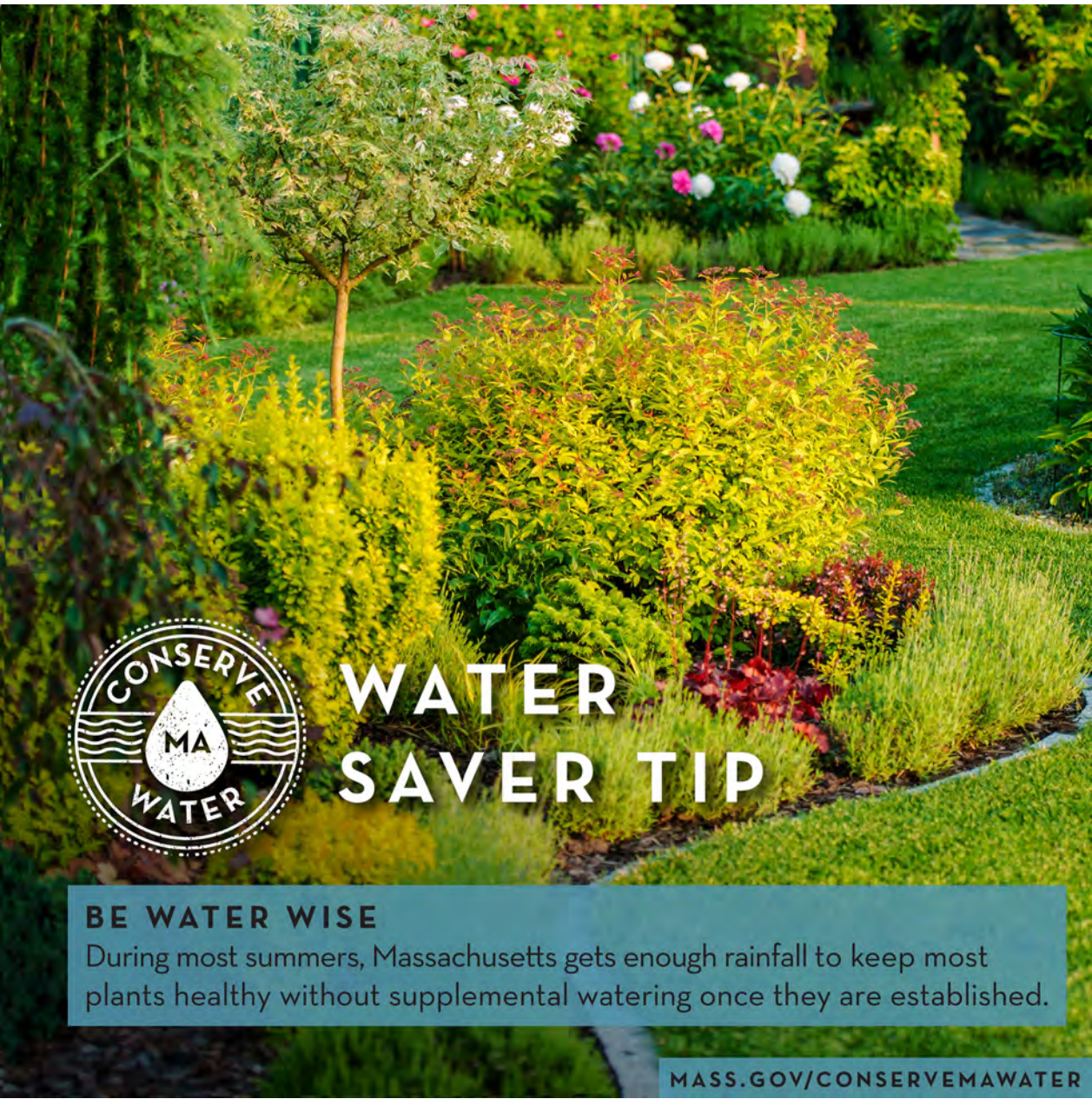
Replace lawn areas with native shrubs and ground covers. Once established, they seldom need supplemental watering.



WATER SAVER TIP

CHOOSE NATIVE PLANTS

Native plants thrive in local soil and climate conditions.
Pictured here: Milkweed



WATER SAVER TIP

BE WATER WISE

During most summers, Massachusetts gets enough rainfall to keep most plants healthy without supplemental watering once they are established.

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WATER SAVER TIP

COMPLY WITH LOCAL WATER RESTRICTIONS

Local water restrictions during the dry months ensure there's enough for people, fire protection and wildlife.

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4-6"



WATER SAVER TIP

HEALTHY SOIL DEPTH

Loose soil that's at least 6" deep holds water better and doesn't dry out so fast. Gardens and lawns stay healthier and require less watering!

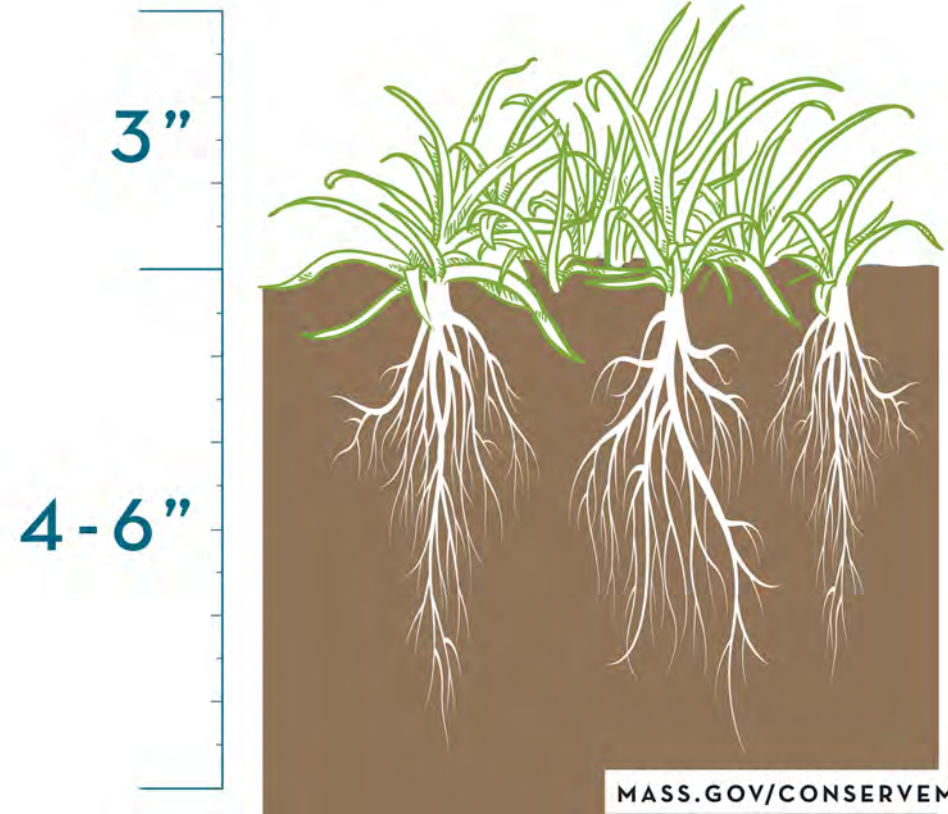
[MASS.GOV/CONSERVEMAWATER](https://www.mass.gov/conservemawater)



WATER SAVER TIP

HOW LOW SHOULD YOU MOW?

Grass kept at a height of 3 inches or higher requires less watering because it retains moisture and grows deeper, stronger roots. As a bonus, it also shades out weeds!



[MASS.GOV/CONSERVEMAWATER](https://www.mass.gov/conservemawater)







ALTERNATIVE IDEAS FOR WATERING PLANTS

-  Using rain barrels
-  Water from dehumidifiers
-  Water that drips from AC units
-  Put a bucket in the shower while waiting for the water to warm up



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TAKE CARE OF YOUR TREES DURING A DROUGHT

Wilting, yellowing, and early leaf drop are signs of drought stress

New/young trees are particularly at risk during drought

Fill watering bags, or slowly water at the base once a week (15 gal / 1.5 in. tree diameter)

Keep soil in tree wells loose by raking



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DROUGHT FACT:

**GOLDEN
LAWNS
ARE OK!**



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INTENSE RAINFALL MIGHT CAUSE TEMPORARY FLOODING, **EVEN DURING A DROUGHT**

THIS DOES **NOT** MEAN THE DROUGHT IS OVER



[MASS.GOV/CONSERVEMAWATER](https://mass.gov/conservemawater)

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[MASS.GOV/CONSERVEMAWATER](https://mass.gov/conservemawater)



WORKERS RELEASING
WATER FROM A HYDRANT
AREN'T BEING WASTEFUL

FLUSHING OF
HYDRANTS IS
ESSENTIAL FOR
MAINTAINING
WATER QUALITY



[MASS.GOV/CONSERVEMAWATER](https://mass.gov/conservemawater)

DROUGHT INCREASES

FIRE
DANGER!



Be extra
careful with
campfires
and grills



Douse all
fires and
charcoal
thoroughly



Do not leave
open flames
unattended



Fully
extinguish
all smoking
materials

[MASS.GOV/CONSERVEMAWATER](https://mass.gov/conservemawater)

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!



HOW IS THE

DROUGHT

IMPACTING YOU?

CONNECT WITH US AT THE MASSACHUSETTS WATER IMPACT REPORTER

[MASS.GOV/WIR](https://mass.gov/wir)

DROUGHT OR NOT,

**SAVE
WATER!**



[MASS.GOV/CONSERVEMAWATER](https://mass.gov/conservemawater)