

APPENDIX C:

Water Conservation at Home

(Adapted from the PA DEP fact sheet, “Drop by Drop: Use Water Wisely”)

Pike County’s groundwater supplies generally meet the water demands of residents and businesses. However, with rising levels of residential and commercial development, recurring drought conditions and increasing human demand, water conservation measures, practiced by businesses and residents, become increasingly important.

While the water withdrawn by an individual household well may not seem significant, many wells in the same watershed can have a cumulative effect. In addition to the potential impacts on residents and businesses, over withdrawal of groundwater also affects surface waters (streams, rivers, wetlands and lakes). Of particular concern are the many miles of streams draining Pike County watersheds. Over the course of a year, groundwater, flowing up from beneath the surface, supplies up to 80% of the water flowing through many of these streams and during dryer, hotter periods, 100% of the water flowing through many streams is supplied by Pike County’s groundwater resources.

Saving water at home also saves money. Residents on community water supplies that are charged a fee for water they use can lower their water bills. And any resident, whether on their own private well or a community well, can save money over the short-term by reducing energy costs, and over the long-term by lessening the wear-and-tear on water-using appliances (dishwashers, washing machines and water heaters) and extending the life of on-lot sewage treatment systems.

The primary water-saving options available to residents include:

- Installing low flow plumbing fixtures
- Purchasing water saving appliances
- Checking for household leaks
- Changing water use habits

Low Flow Plumbing Fixtures

Water saving plumbing fixtures and appliances are cost effective, providing short and long term economic advantages. Low-flow toilets, showerheads and faucet aerators save valuable water and energy used to heat water without requiring a change in personal use habits.

Bathroom

- If your present toilet was manufactured before 1994, consider placing a plastic gallon container in the toilet tank to save water with each flush. (Toilets manufactured since 1994 are designed to use less water).
- Install low flow showerheads and faucets that use no more than 2.5 gallons per minute at maximum flow.

Kitchen/Laundry

- Replace a top loading clothes washer with a front loading unit that uses about 30% less water and 40-50 % less energy.
- Operate a clothes washer or dishwasher only when fully loaded.
- Set the proper water level and load size selection on clothes washers according to the amount of laundry being washed.
- Install low flow aerators on all faucets.

Repair Leaks

- Fix leaky faucets and connections. Hot water leaks waste water, energy and money.
- A leak inside a toilet can waste up to 200 gallons of water a day. Toilet leaks can be detected by adding a few drops of food dye to water in the toilet tank. If the colored water appears in the bowl, the tank is leaking.

Changing Water Use Habits

In addition to installing low flow plumbing fixtures, purchasing water saving appliances and repairing leaks, water use can be reduced by changing your water use habits inside and outside the home.

Water Saving Tips Inside the Home

- Turn the faucet off while brushing teeth and use a glass of water for rinsing.
- When shaving, use a sink filled with rinse water instead of letting the faucet run.
- Take short showers instead of baths and consider bathing small children together.
- If the shower has a single hand control or shut-off valve, turn off while soaping or shampooing (some low flow shower heads offer a convenient shut-off valve for easily

turning a shower off and back on again without needing to adjust water temperature).

- Keep a container of water for drinking in the refrigerator instead of letting a faucet run until cold water flows.
- Rinse vegetables in the sink with the drain closed or in a pan of water and use leftover water for plants.
- If you wash dishes by hand, do not let the faucet run for rinsing. Instead, use a dish rack and spray device to rinse them. If you have two sinks, fill one with rinse water.

Water Saving Tips Outside the Home

- Use a broom, instead of a hose or power sprayer, to clean driveways, steps and sidewalks.
- Wash the car with water from a bucket. If a hose is used, control the flow with an automatic shut-off nozzle.
- Water the lawn only when needed. Grass that grows little or goes dormant during dry periods will generally rebound when rain returns.
- Water the lawn or garden during the coolest parts of the day in early morning or early evening. Avoid watering on windy days.
- Set sprinklers to water the lawn or garden only and not streets, driveways or sidewalks.
- Reduce the water use in the garden by 20 to 50 percent by using soaker hoses and drip or trickle irrigation systems. These systems also save time that would otherwise be spent watering.
- Use mulch around shrubs and garden plants to reduce loss of water from soils and to cut down on weed growth.
- In landscaping, use native plants that require less care and water.
- When not in use, cover swimming pools to prevent evaporation.
- Adjust lawn mowers to a higher setting to provide natural ground shade and to promote water retention by soil.