

School's Open for Water Savings!

Summer is over, and back to the routine of preparing for school and work. Make sure to incorporate water saving practices into the daily preparations so water isn't being wasted. Remind everyone to turn off the faucet while brushing teeth and/or shaving, saving up to 8 gallons of water daily. Consider taking a shower instead of filling the tub full of water. A 5 minute shower uses between 10 to 25 gallons as compared to a full tub which uses up to 70 gallons. Remind family members to let you know if they see or hear water dripping from faucets in the kitchen and bathrooms (including shower heads), or the toilet running or flushing when not in use. These are typically signs of leaks which need to be repaired. Ghost flushing (when the toilet flushes on its own) and water constantly running in the toilet bowl may indicate that the flapper is worn and needs to be replaced. If faucets or shower heads are leaking, then gaskets or the fixture may need replacing. Some homeowners may be able to handle these repairs on their own. If unsure, then call a qualified plumber. Fixing leaks throughout the home can save thousands of gallons of water annually. To learn more visit USEPA's [WaterSense - Start Saving](https://www.epa.gov/watersense/start-saving)



(<https://www.epa.gov/watersense/start-saving>). Remember to request WaterSense certified fixtures when replacing faucets and toilets for added savings.



Fall Landscape Reminders



As the weather cools, it's time to adjust irrigation schedules. As the seasons change, plants begin the process of acclimatizing to these changes. This includes needing less water. Adjust the irrigation controller to meet your landscape's needs during this time. Don't forget to winterize the system before temperatures freeze. If you do not know how to do this, call an irrigation system professional who does.

New Jersey has a Fertilizer Law that has black out dates for applying fertilizers. Homeowners cannot apply fertilizers that contain nitrogen and/or phosphorus between November 15th and March 1st.

Fertilizers containing other essential nutrients (other than nitrogen and phosphorus) are legal to apply during the "black out" period. Commercial applicators cannot apply fertilizers between December 1st and March 1st. If using a commercial landscaping service make sure they are certified by the State. To learn more visit Rutgers NJAES/SEB Newsroom concerning *NJ Fertilizer Law Restrictions on Home Lawn Applications – What Homeowners Should Know* (<https://sebsnjaesnews.rutgers.edu/2013/11/nj-fertilizer-law-restrictions-on-home-lawn-applications-now-in-effect/>). Remember to test the soil first before applying fertilizers to know if it needs them. Applying more than necessary does not help the home landscape and harms local waterways.

