

SATURNA DEPENDS ON WATER CONSERVATION

The Saturna Island Property Owners Association (SIPOA) is committed to preserving and protecting the water resources of Saturna Island. The water quantity and quality challenges we face on Saturna are complex issues to resolve.

Regulation can only do so much and there are few incentives available to retrofit homes to reduce the demand on water sources. However, making water conservation an everyday priority is a vital step toward reducing water usage. ***Please take this important step.***

WATER CONSERVATION TIPS FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

Water supply

The importance of protecting Saturna water resources cannot be overstated. Groundwater (private and public wells) is the major source of potable water on Saturna. Yes, it rains a lot on the island during the winter but summers usually have long periods of drought.

Saturna also has four organized water systems varying in size from about 10 to 170 connections. Three of these systems are private and the Capital Regional District manages the fourth. With the exception of the CRD reservoir, these systems are on community wells.

Rainwater capture is increasingly being used to supplement water supply. Many new homes on Saturna are incorporating rainwater capture for home use and many existing homes are supplementing their wells with additional rainwater storage for the dry summers. The Islands Trust has mandated rainwater capture for all new homes at East Point (Bylaw 99). Currently, the CRD considers these systems an “unconventional water source” and requires an additional engineering inspection before providing a Certificate of Occupancy.

However, local contractors have experience with these systems and can be of help with the planning and installation. For additional information, please go to www.sipoa.ca for Islands Trust and Capital Regional District regulations.

Water conservation

Simply stated, conserving water, using water more efficiently or reducing consumption where you can, all help to protect the resource now and for the future. And it is easy.

With minor changes to the way you do things, or to the equipment you use, you can reduce water consumption in your home. The benefits of efficient water use apply equally to households with private wells and septic disposal systems as they do to those on water distribution systems.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

While most of these ideas are not new, it is useful to be reminded of them because the best protection of our water resource comes from decisions you make. If you are purchasing, building, renovating or visiting a home on Saturna, please consider the following tips.

Bathroom

Bathroom use accounts for about 65 per cent of water used inside the home.

- Choose variable flush or low flush toilets for new installations or replacement; you will save many litres per flush. Older standard toilets use 13 litres per flush; low flush toilets use 6 litres or less. Variable flush ones use water only as long as you hold the handle down.
- Install a low-flow showerhead; this can cut shower water volume in half.
- Put a bucket under the showerhead to collect water while it is getting hot; this can be used to water your plants.
- Take short showers—no more than three minutes is one recommendation.
- Turn the sink tap off while brushing your teeth, shaving or washing your face.
- Don't use the toilet as a wastebasket or flush it unnecessarily.



Kitchen

- Choose a low-flow “Energy Star” dishwasher when installing or renovating; newer ones cut water use by 25 per cent.
- Run your dishwasher when it is completely full and use the economy cycle whenever possible.
- Install a low-flow faucet aerator on your sink. It can cut water use in half.
- Do not let the faucet run when rinsing dishes or cleaning fruits and vegetables and if possible, use a dishpan in your sink to collect water (if non-greasy, this is great water for your plants).

Laundry

- When buying or replacing a clothes washer purchase a water-saving model. These save up to 40 per cent of the water required.
- Wash only full loads in the clothes washer and if you use cold water you also save on energy costs.
- For a limited time BC Hydro has rebates on washers and many other products. Check out its website at www.bchydro.com.

Repairs

Leaks can be costly. One drop per second wastes about 10,000 litres of water per year.

- Repair dripping faucets. Often leaks are caused by a worn out washer that costs pennies to replace.
- Insulate your hot water heater; you will get hot water faster and avoid wasting water.
- Check the seals on your toilets. Older models often leak. Replacing an older toilet or replacing a leaky seal will save significant amounts of water.

Outdoor planting and watering

Summer outdoor watering can add up to 50 per cent of your water use. Environment Canada studies show that as much as half of outdoor use is wasteful.

Avoid using precious well water on your garden; use rainwater instead.

- Collect rainwater in a barrel or other large container outfitted with a spigot and a cover to use for watering your garden (or washing your car!)
- When planting, add two to four inches of organic material to the hole. Greater soil depth will increase the ability of the soil to retain moisture.
- Use low-flow targeted sprinklers or a low-flow irrigation hose next to the roots of your plants. A little water goes a long way. Over-watering causes yellow leaves or poor plant health
- Check your irrigation system regularly for any leaks and fix them.
- Reduce evaporation loss by watering early in the morning.
- An automatic shutoff hose nozzle helps ensure water does not keep running when you finish watering. Better yet, turn off the hose at the faucet.
- Please do not water your lawn. It is natural for it to turn brown in the summer.

Maintaining your well

If you are replacing your well pump, purchase a low flow pump (it will reduce both energy and water consumption).

- For existing wells, raise the level of your well pump to about 10 feet below the surface. Shallower pumps tend to reduce saline intrusion.
- Consider installing a douse valve and meter with an automatic shut-off for leak detection.
- Install a storage tank on your well system to buffer water demand during the dry months of summer.

Away days (weeks or months)

If you are leaving the island for several months turn off your well pump. If you are on a tank-supplied system, turn off your supply line whenever you leave the island for more than a day. **Don't forget to leave a note in a prominent place letting the Fire Department know where to find your switch or supply tap in the event of a fire!**

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

It's vital for all of Saturna to become pro-active in protecting our shared water supply.

Each of us is responsible for incorporating water conservation into our way of life so that clean fresh water will be available now and into the future.




TIM GAGE

SATURNA ISLAND PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION (SIPOA)

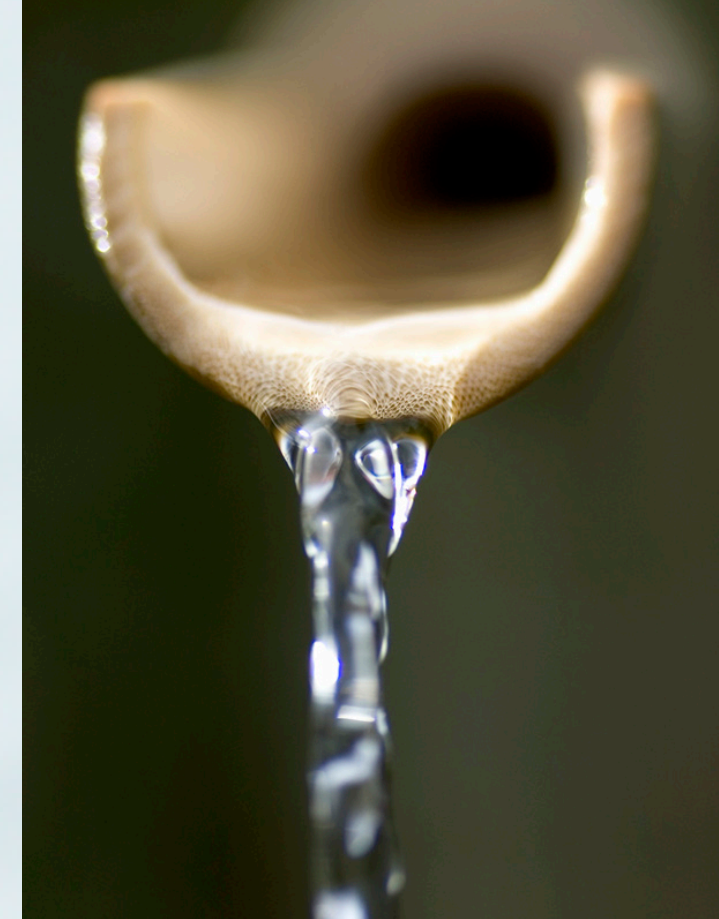
SIPOA is a registered non-profit society. If you wish more information or want to get involved, please join us. You will be welcome.

SIPOA
PO Box 21
Saturna Island, BC, V0N 2Y0
sipoa@saturnanet.net
www.sipoa.ca

Publication of this leaflet was assisted by a grant from the Saturna Local Trust Committee.

 Printed on recycled paper.

Saturna Island Property Owners Association 2012



WATER CONSERVATION ON SATURNA ISLAND