

# Help Out in a Drought.



## Water efforts are community efforts.

Practicing water conservation supports our community. Every effort helps keep water secure for emergencies, firefighting, hospitals, drinking, and many other uses.



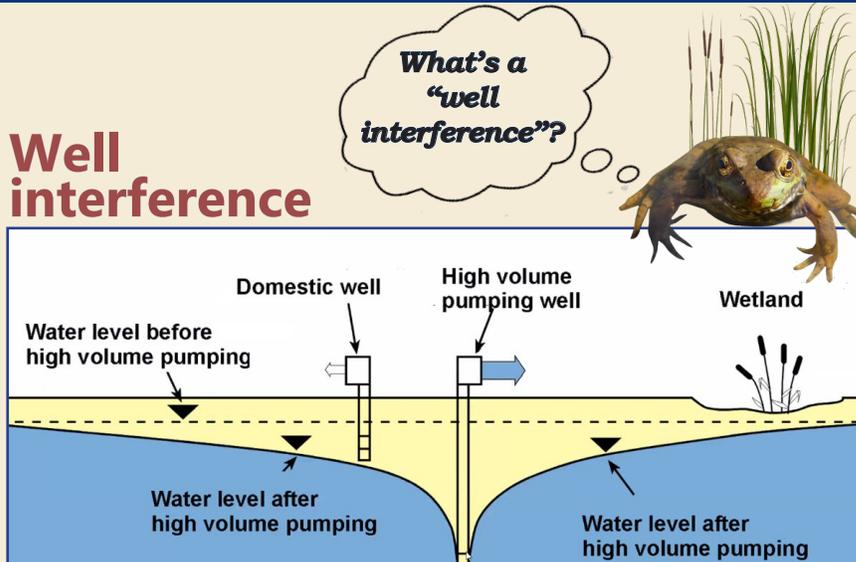
Clean Water MN

## “It rained, is the drought over?”

The drought may not end after one or several rainfalls. Even when drought conditions are officially over, the impact of the drought still remains. It may take a couple of years for groundwater to recover due to a delay in how rain water slowly soaks into the ground. The responsible approach is to always practice conservation, even when it looks like water is plentiful on the surface.

## Well interference

What's a “well interference”?



## Prevent water headaches.

Well interference occurs when groundwater levels drop below the reach of a well, often influenced by a deeper or higher use well nearby. Groundwater supplies may still be sufficient, but the changes in pressure and water movement can create inconvenient or costly issues such as mineral contamination. Keeping up on water conservation efforts when there's no issues helps reduce future complications and supports our neighbors.

# Water conservation tips:

Visit [VLAWMO.org/residents](http://VLAWMO.org/residents) for more water tips, videos, and resources.

Choose a sprinkler that disperses water low to the ground and in drops opposed to a high mist.	Water grass in the morning or evening. Before watering, step on the grass. If it springs back, you can skip watering for the day.
For irrigation systems, swap a clock-timed controller with a smart irrigation controller to prevent sprinklers from watering when it's raining.	Think beyond odd/even watering day policies. Pay attention to rainfall and adjust watering schedules accordingly. Turf generally needs just 1" of water/week.
Consider allowing a dormant or slightly dormant "tan" look to the lawn. Dormancy is a normal part of the turf grass annual cycle.	Never water pavement. Sprinkler placement should keep water on the lawn and stray or broken irrigation heads are usually an easy fix.
Plant turf grass only where it will be used for play or similar purposes. In areas that are visual and only mowed, consider an alternative turf (see below).	Maintain a 3" lawn mowing height to encourage deeper roots that hold more moisture. Practicing this in the first half of the year boosts root growth instead of blade growth, and creates a drought buffer for dry periods.
Try to save the garbage disposal for larger uses and compost food scraps more frequently.	Keep a pitcher of cold water in the fridge to reduce time spent waiting for the faucet to change temperature.
Choose drought-tolerant and native plant varieties that require little watering aside from normal rainfall.	Group plants in hydro-zones based on their watering needs so you don't waste water on plants that don't need it.
Turn off the tap while brushing your teeth, washing your hands, or shaving to save up to 200 gallons of water per month.	If you have water left in your reusable water bottle, pour whatever you didn't finish on house plants or store in refrigerator for later.
Think ahead for meal planning. Place frozen food in the refrigerator overnight instead of running water to thaw food.	Shorten showers by just one minute and you can save more than 500 gallons of water per year and enough electricity to run a laptop. Try turning the water off periodically during showers.
Check toilets and faucets often for leaks and make repairs quickly.	Wait to run dishwashers and laundry machines for a full load. Doing one less load of dishes per week saves over 500 gallons per year.
Replace your shower head with a WaterSense labeled model and you'll save enough water each year to wash more than 80 loads of laundry.	Try keeping a bucket in the shower to collect rinse or non-soapy water. Take outside to water trees or garden plants.

## More ways to help:

### Bulk up on rain barrels.

Reuse rooftop runoff for watering plants, washing tools, or other uses.

### Redirect downspouts away from pavement.

If sloping away from a basement, a simple downspout redirect can help retain soil moisture, reduce watering needs, and support a slower, stable water cycle. Pooling should be kept at least 10' away from basement foundations.

### Explore new turf horizons.

A conventional turf may not be the best choice for water use or your maintenance routine. Consider the many options of lo-mow turf, bee lawns, or single-species groundcovers for water-friendly landscaping. Alternative turfs can be specific to site needs and often need less maintenance once established.

### Go big (or small) with raingardens.

Design a runoff strategy for predictability while encouraging valuable upland water storage. Raingardens are bowl-shaped gardens that intentionally capture and infiltrate stormwater back into the ground in less than 48 hours. They can be big or small and work best when strategically placed.

### Celebrate!

Like any neighborly gesture, extra efforts for water resources can go unnoticed.

Be proud and pat yourself on the back for supporting your community in a long-term, crucial way!

