



## From the Tap...

### Keeping It Green

Have you been studying the new gardening catalogs planning your dream garden? To keep that dream garden green all summer, you might want to consider these tips:

Use drought-tolerant plants recommended for our area, including aster, daylilies, lantana, lavender and purple coneflower.

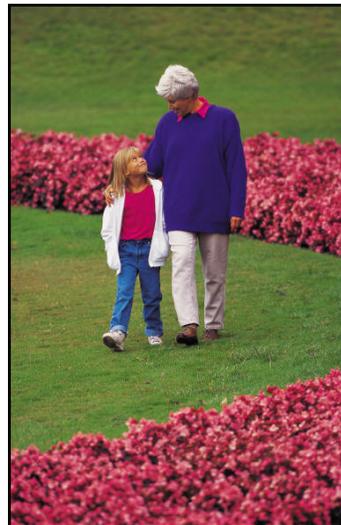
Plant low water-use grass, such as centipede, zoysia or Bermuda. Just remember to plant some evergreens, too, so your garden will be green year round.

Shade reduces water evaporation, so be sure to plan plenty of shade for your garden.

Think of mulch as sun block for your garden. Just two to four inches will retain soil moisture, slow evaporation and protect roots.

Water wisely! Morning is the best time to water and using a rain gauge will ensure you don't over water.

Keep weeds under control. Weeds steal water and nutrients from your grass and plants.



For more tips on water-wise gardening, visit [www.fairfaxwater.org](http://www.fairfaxwater.org) and click on Water—Use it Wisely.



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### Annual Water-Main Flushing Program

Each spring, April through June, Fairfax Water flushes its water mains by opening fire hydrants and allowing them to flow freely for a short period of time. The flushing clears sediment from the mains and provides for routine maintenance

of the more than 22,000 fire hydrants in the Fairfax County service area.

Flushing of fire hydrants normally occurs at night between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m.

Flushing may result in

some discoloration and the presence of sediment in your water. These conditions are not harmful and should be of short duration.

We appreciate your patience during this program.



## Rate Increase Effective April 1, 2008– Rates Remain Lowest in Region

Fairfax Water revised its Schedule of Rates, Fees and Charges, to be effective with meter readings taken on or after April 1, 2008.

The revisions include increases in the Water Usage (Commodity) Charge from \$1.55 to \$1.70 per 1,000 gallons and Quarterly Billing Service Charge (from \$6.00 to \$6.25). To see the complete Schedule of Rates, Fees and Charges, visit our Web site at [www.fcwa.org/rates/index.htm](http://www.fcwa.org/rates/index.htm), or call our Customer Service Department at (703) 698-5800 for more information.

The proposed increase in the Water Usage (Commodity) Charge (from \$1.55 to \$1.70 per 1,000 gallons) will mean an increase of \$3.60 per quarter, or \$14.40 per year, for an average customer's water bill. Even with these revisions, Fairfax Water rates will remain the lowest in the region.



**Water-Saving Tip #23:  
Time your shower to  
keep it under 5 minutes.  
You'll save up to 1,000  
gallons a month.**



For more information and other water-saving tips, visit [www.wateruseitwisely.com](http://www.wateruseitwisely.com)

## Chlorine Taste and Odor

During the annual flushing program, you may notice a slight chlorine taste and odor in your drinking water. It is the result of a routine change in the form of chlorine used in the treatment process.

Chlorine is added as a disinfectant during the treatment process. Normally, chlorine is chemically bound to ammonia to help stabilize the available chlorine. This bound chlorine is also known as combined chlorine or chloramines.

During the annual water main flushing program, Fairfax Water uses free, or unbound, chlorine which has more odor than combined chlorine. Free chlorine is a stronger disinfectant than combined chlorine. It is not harmful and is used to ensure that the

more than 3,200 miles of water mains that deliver your drinking water are free of harmful bacteria.

If you are especially sensitive to the taste and odor of chlorine, keep an open container of drinking water in your refrigerator. This will enable the chlorine to dissipate, thus reducing the chlorine taste. Remember, drinking water has a shelf life! Change the water in your refrigerated container weekly.



## Editor's Note

If you have comments or suggestions about this publication, let us hear from you.

E-mail us at [jbailey@fairfaxwater.org](mailto:jbailey@fairfaxwater.org) or write us at the address below. If you have questions regarding water service, please call Customer Service at (703) 698-5800, TTY 711.

For all other departments, call (703) 698-5600, TTY 711; After-hours emergency, call (703) 698-5613, TTY 711.

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