

NEW

Water Conservation Bylaw



Frequently Asked Questions

Why do we need a Water Conservation Bylaw?

St. Albert City Council directed Administration to develop a Water Conservation Bylaw which focuses on low-flow fixtures for new developments and major renovations, as well as restrictions for outdoor water use.

The goal of the bylaw is to help promote the efficient use of water in the community and reduce water waste.

What are the major focuses of the Water Conservation Bylaw?

The two major focuses of the Water Conservation Bylaw are:

- 1) Low-flow fixtures required in new developments and major renovations; and
- 2) Outdoor daytime sprinkler restrictions.

Low-flow fixtures include toilets, urinals, showerheads, residential sink faucets and public restroom faucets. These are only required in new developments and major renovations in residential, commercial, industrial, or institutional construction. Retail locations only stock fixtures that are in the rain or low flow or ultra low flow.

Outdoor daytime sprinkler restrictions occur during high outdoor water use months (May 1 to October 1) and include daily watering times that minimize the loss of water through evaporation and maximize benefits to grass and other plants.

If you are using municipally supplied water from a hose, pipe, sprinkler or permanent water irrigation system, and it is between May 1 and October 1, you are permitted to water between 7 p.m. and 9 a.m.

EXCEPTIONS:

-] You can water at any time if you are using a water can, hose with nozzle or drip irrigation – these devices control the amount of water used and do not use excess water.
-] Recreational use of sprinklers and water toys is permitted at any time.
-] Newly laid sod and seeding lawn may be watered in any manner until the first cut only.
-] Other landscaping may be watered in any manner to the extent that there is a risk that a new tree, shrub, or other vegetation will perish.

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I've read that evaporation is lowest between 4 and 9 a.m. so why are we not following that watering time?

Research shows that evaporation is reduced if watering occurs in the early morning, typically recommended between 4 and 9 a.m., when the air is still cool and the wind is usually at its calmest. Early morning watering also gives grass and plants a chance to dry off before evening, which can protect them from disease and pests. However, 4 to 9 a.m. is not a convenient time for residents who do not have sprinkler timers, so the bylaw extends the allowable times from 7 p.m. to 9 a.m. to allow evening watering. This allows for increased convenience while also minimizing evaporation, although not as significantly as would be achieved through early morning watering.

How will I know if I'm in compliance with the bylaw?

Low-flow fixtures are only required for new developments and buildings undergoing renovations. If you are living in your existing home, with no plans for renovations, you are not required to purchase low-flow fixtures. Please note: retail locations only stock low-flow fixtures.

If you have a yard, it's important to familiarize yourself with the proposed outdoor daytime sprinkler restrictions. Please review the second question above that outlines outdoor daytime sprinkler restrictions and exceptions or review the [Water Conservation Bylaw](#).

Does this bylaw apply to my business?

Yes. The bylaw is for all residential, commercial, industrial or institutional buildings within St. Albert.

What if I'm selling my house? Do I need to get low-flow fixtures?

If you are selling your home, you are not required to get low-flow fixtures. However, if you are doing any sort of renovation, you are required to install low-flow fixtures. Fixtures available at retail outlets will meet at a minimum the low flow rates in the bylaw, although ultra low flow fixtures are also available.

My yard is full of flowers and gardens. How do you suggest I water them?

If you typically use a hose, pipe or outdoor tap, sprinkler or permanent water irrigation system, you are permitted to water between 7 p.m. and 9 a.m. from May 1 to October 1.

However, if you have a hose with a nozzle, drip irrigation or use a water can, you can water flowers and gardens at any time. This is because you are controlling the amount of water that you use and do not waste excess water.

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I just planted a new tree and it needs a lot of water to get established. How does the bylaw work with new trees, shrubs or sod?

The bylaw has exceptions for newly laid sod, trees, shrubs or other new vegetation.

-) You can water at any time if you are using a water can, hose with nozzle or drip irrigation – these devices control the amount of water used and do not use excess water.
-) Newly laid sod and seeding lawn may be watered in any manner until the first cut only.
-) Other landscaping may be watered in any manner to the extent that there is a risk that a new tree, shrub, or other vegetation will perish.

What is the difference in using a hose nozzle as opposed to a sprinkler?

A hose nozzle, drip irrigation etc. control the amount of water being used and do not waste excess water. The goal of the bylaw is to promote the efficient use of water in the community and reduce waste water.

How will the bylaw be enforced?

The regulations for the low-flow fixtures and outdoor water restrictions will be enforced on a complaint basis only to the City of St. Albert's Municipal Enforcement Services.

Will the City also be reducing its water usage in the same way?

The City of St. Albert will comply with the bylaw. In addition, the update of the [Environment Sustainability Policy](#) includes standards for the corporation to set an example for the community including conserving natural resources in its day to day operations.

When will the bylaw come into effect?

The bylaw comes into effect January 1, 2018.