



# Build It Back Green

## Install Water Efficient Toilets, Faucets, & Showerheads

### **BENEFITS**

According to the U.S. Geological Society, the average American uses **50 to 100 gallons of water per day**. The average American household spends approximately **\$500 per year on water and sewerage bills**.

By switching to low-flow toilets, faucets, and showerheads, the average household **can save thousands of gallons of water per year and reduce their yearly water and sewerage bill by \$200**.



### **DESCRIPTION & CHARACTERISTICS**

Today's low-flow toilets, faucets, and showerheads work as well or better than standard fixtures. New technology provides enough pressure for toilets to flush completely and for showers and faucets to give enough water. The table below identifies the number of gallons used by low-flow fixtures versus standard ones.

	Low-Flow	Standard	Water Savings
Toilets	1.6 gallons of water per flush	3.5 gallons per flush	1.9 gallons per flush
Faucets	2.5 gallons of water per minute	4.5 gallons per minute	2.0 gallons per minute
Showerheads	2.5 gallons of water per minute	4.0 gallons per minute	1.5 gallons per minute

Products & Practices Sheets



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## **INSTALLATION & PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT TIPS**

### **Toilets**

Below are some tips on buying a low-flow toilet and how to improve the water efficiency of an existing toilet.

- There are three basic toilet design systems:
  1. **High Performance Gravity-Fed:** This is the most common type of toilet. This system uses a small amount of water with the force of gravity to flush waste. This style can be relatively inexpensive.
  2. **Two-Button:** This is a type of gravity-fed toilet that allows the user to select either a half flush for liquid waste or a full flush for solid waste.
  3. **Pressure-Assisted:** This toilet uses a small amount of water with compressed air to flush waste. This toilet uses less water and is more powerful than a gravity-fed toilet, however it is more expensive and louder.
- To reduce the amount of water, per flush, of an existing toilet, fill a half-gallon plastic container with water, seal it, and place it in the tank.

### **Faucets**

- If you are not in the market to buy a new low-flow faucet, you can simply install an aerator on your existing faucet to achieve water use reduction.
- Fix leaky faucets.
- Turn the faucet off when brushing your teeth or shaving.

### **Showerheads**

- There are two types of low-flow showerheads:
  1. **Aerating:** Aerating showerheads mix air into the water stream.
  2. **Non-Aerating:** Non-aerating showerheads do not mix air into the water flow, but instead, pulses the water on and off quickly.

## **PRODUCT TYPES & PRICES**

- The estimated cost of low-flow fixtures can range from \$10 to \$150. The estimated cost of installing low-flow fixtures or retrofitting existing ones for a typical 1200 square foot shotgun house can range from \$500 to \$1200.
- Some low-flow fixtures may be purchased at Home Depot. Other local suppliers are identified on the **Vendors List** available on our website at **globalgreen.org/bibg** and in the **New Orleans Green Building Resource Center** at 841 Carondelet Street.