

Single-family residential customers of the Albemarle County Service Authority have been taking advantage of a toilet rebate program that has been offered for going on two years. This program, along with a similar program offered by the City of Charlottesville, has provided tremendous financial and water savings to those who have taken advantage of them. The replacement of old water guzzling toilets with new low-flow types, along with the adoption of other water saving practices (and a lot of rain) have helped contribute to an overall decline in water consumption within the urban area. Water consumption levels are at nearly two million gallons less per day than in previous summers.

Proud of this accomplishment, the Albemarle County Service Authority wants to do even more. This fiscal year an additional \$100,000 has been appropriated for a toilet rebate program that will not only be available to single-family residential customers, but multi-family residential, commercial, industrial and institutional customers as well.

When residential customers replace older, high-flow toilets with new low-flow types the savings can be remarkable. It is estimated that the largest source of indoor residential water use is the toilet, accounting for up to 30 percent of the water used indoors in single-family homes with high water use toilets. The average person flushes 5.1 times per day at home, resulting in 18 to 36 gallons of water used per day when high water use toilets are present, but just eight gallons daily with a low-flow toilet. A family of four could save 44 to 116 gallons per day, or 15,840 to 41,760 gallons annually.

Just as residential customers, non-residential customers stand to benefit tremendously from participating in a toilet rebate program. Water audits conducted by Amy Vickers and Associates have estimated that in non-residential buildings that were built between 1980 and 1994 women use 12 gallons per capita daily (gpcd) and men use 4 gpcd for flushing toilets. By updating toilets to new low-flow models savings of 7.2 gallons per day per female and 2.4 gallons per day per male can be expected. This equates to 624 gallons per male and 1,872 gallons per female per year.

The average low-flow toilet costs just \$150, a cost that can be recouped in as little as one year, and even sooner with Albemarle County Service Authority's rebate. If rumors of double flushing have deterred you from updating the fixtures in your home or office, do not be dissuaded. When these toilets first came onto the market after the passage of the Energy Policy Act of 1992 the technology had not yet been perfected. Years after this act made law that all plumbing fixtures in the United States meet a maximum allowable flow-rate standard, the technology has been greatly improved; today's low-flow toilets are quieter and much more efficient, seldom requiring a second flush and making them a welcome addition to any bathroom.

If you or your business is a customer of the Albemarle County Service Authority, be sure to find out if you are eligible to participate in one of the toilet rebate programs. For more information visit [www.acsanet.com](http://www.acsanet.com) and look under "Conservation."