



# Water Conservation for Restaurants

**Water is one of our community's most precious resources and it plays an important role in the operations of most local businesses. Using water efficiently is important to businesses for both environmental and financial reasons. The Resource Venture is a partner in the Saving Water Partnership and provides free technical assistance to show businesses how to conserve water. We can help you take advantage of financial incentives (available through the regional Water Smart Technology Program) which cover up to 50% of the cost of installing or replacing inefficient fixtures and equipment. Businesses that have participated in the program over the past six years have experienced water and wastewater savings of approximately \$3.5 million each year.**

## Business Solutions

There are a variety of opportunities for restaurants to reduce water use and expense. Ivar's two main restaurants, for example, have been able to reduce water use by more than 12 million gallons each year, at annual savings of over \$93,000. The following are some solutions that restaurants should consider when investigating potential water saving measures.

- Ice Machines:** Water-cooled ice machines should be replaced with air cooled units or units that are cooled by a closed loop of water. Savings can be as much as \$1,000 per year.
- Toilets and Urinals:** Several Seattle restaurants have installed high quality, low-water-use toilets and now they are saving hundreds of dollars on their water bills.
- Restroom Faucets:** Most restroom faucets use 2.5 to 5 gallons per minute, which is wasteful and unnecessary. Low-flow faucets are affordable and can reduce the flow to 1/2 gallon per minute. Other options include faucets that operate "hands free" and those with automatic shutoff features.
- Commercial Dishwashing:** Look for leaks. A leak found in Overlake Hospital's dishwasher was wasting \$1,300 in water each year. Check to make sure the dishwasher is not using more water than the manufacturer

specifies; and that water only flows when the dishes enter the machine.

- Cleaning:** Install manual triggers on all sink spray hoses so that water is used on demand. Consider sweeping and mopping to reduce spray washing of interior and exterior spaces.
- Thawing:** Plan ahead and use a refrigerator to gradually thaw frozen food (to avoid having to run a lot of water over it).
- Garbage Disposal:** Install a foot pedal or other manual controls so that disposal water only runs when needed. Consider setting up a composting program for the non-meat food waste. This will save water *and* energy. The composted food waste will also create a useful soil amendment. (Compost can be used to reduce landscaping watering needs.)

## Financial Incentives

Through the **Water Smart Technology Program**, businesses can receive financial assistance to help improve their water conservation performance. All kinds of cost-effective water-efficiency projects will be considered for financial incentives, and Resource Venture staff can help expedite your application. Here are just a few examples of such projects:

- Replacement toilets and urinals: from \$60 to \$120 for replacing a high-flow fixture with a more efficient one.

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## Financial Incentives *(continued)*

- Commercial ice machines: from \$200 to \$1,000 for replacing a water-cooled ice machine with an air-cooled machine.
- Commercial irrigation systems: up to 50% of the cost of improving system components.

### At Your Service

The Resource Venture provides *free* information, assistance and referrals to help Seattle businesses improve their environmental performance. We are a partnership of the Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce and Seattle Public Utilities.



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