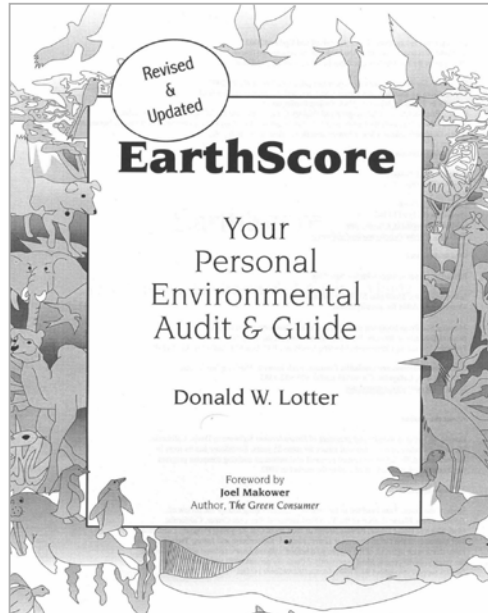


EarthScore

Section 4 – Water

Grinning Planet adaptation, 2004



Water Quiz

Impact Question 1 – Lawn and Garden

My watered lawn and garden space (excluding food gardens) is ____.

Choices	Add
less than 200 sq.ft.	2
200-500 sq.ft.	4
500-1,000 sq.ft.	8
1,000-3,000 sq.ft.	16
more than 3,000 sq.ft.	32

Score Adjustment:

If you have water-saving grasses such as buffalo grass, wheatgrass, zoysia grass, tall or fine fescue, or bermuda grass, reduce your score for Question 1 by one level.

Lawn and Garden Water Tips

Lawns and gardens commonly account for 80% of the water used in a suburban household. A week of watering the various lawns listed to the left would take a minimum of 100, 200, 500, 1,000 and 2,000 gallons of water, respectively. Inefficient watering or hot spells could double these numbers.

Decreasing the frequency of your lawn mowing will also help reduce water needs, since mowing puts the grass under stress. Raising the blade of your mower to at least three inches will maintain longer leaf surfaces of the lawn and thus require less water to keep green and healthy.

Watering in the early morning or at night reduces the amount of water that evaporates before water gets into the soil.

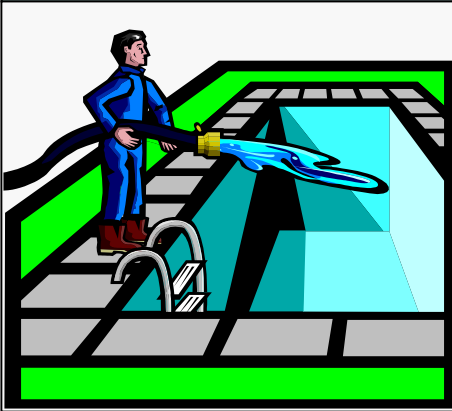
Resources

- [Oasis Design](#) — An ecological design consulting company

Impact Question 2 – Backyard Swimming Pools

Choose your swimming pool status.

Choices	Add
I do not have a swimming pool	0
I have a swimming pool that doesn't leak	4
I have a swimming pool that leaks some	6
I have a swimming pool that leaks a lot	8



Swimming Pool Water Tips

About one in twenty pools leaks. Just a small leak in a pool can result in the loss of 700 gallons of water per day. If your pool loses more than a quarter inch of water per day (or half an inch in hot, dry regions), you probably have a leak.

A swimming pool loses no more water through evaporation than an average lawn of the same dimension. Covering the pool may help reduce water loss due to evaporation by up to 90%.

To determine the number of gallons your pool uses per day (both evaporation and leakage), use one of the following formulas:

For rectangular pools:

pool length (in feet)
 x pool width (in feet)
 x inches of water lost per day
 x .6233

For round pools or spas:

diameter (in feet)
 x diameter (in feet) (yes, again)
 x inches of water lost per day
 x .48929

Impact Question 3 – Car Washing, etc.

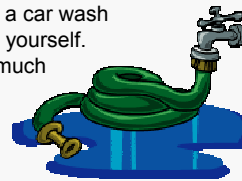
I use ___ water to wash my car and other outside things, like my patio.

Choices	Add
no	0
a little	1
a moderate amount of	2
a lot of	3

Car Washing Water Tips

Check for leaks in your hoses and use nozzles that completely turn off the water when the hose is not in use to minimize the waste of water.

Consider going to a car wash instead of doing it yourself. They usually are much more efficient in terms of water use.



Impact Question 4 – Leaking Fixtures

Leaky faucets or pipes in my house or on my property cause ____ waste of water.

Choices	Add
no or very little	0
a little	2
some	4
a fair amount of	6
extensive	8

Sink and Toilet Tips

A small leak from a faucet can waste 50 gallons of water per day.

A leaky toilet can waste 8,000 gallons a month. To identify a toilet leak, put some food coloring in the tank. If it shows up in the bowl without flushing, you have a leak.

Regular-flow toilets use 5-7 gallons per flush. This amount can be reduced by installing a plastic bottle or dam. Or replace the toilet with a low-flow model.

Impact Section Scoring

Add together your scores from the four Impact questions and see where you fall in the Impact rating scheme.

7 or less	You're an Eco-Titan
8-10	You're an Eco-Hero
11-20	You're an Eco-Mentor
21-30	You're an Eco-Average Citizen
31-35	You're an Eco-Frankenstein
36-45	You're an Eco-Sherman Tank
46-50	You're an Eco-Tyrannosaurus rex

Now, on to the Action questions—and another chance to score well!
Start from 0 again and add points as specified by the sections below.

Action Question 1 – Water-Saving Landscaping

By using strategies such as planting drought resistant lawn and garden plants (xeriscaping), using efficient watering systems (such as drip irrigation), and planting trees, I have reduced my water consumption _____.

Choices	Add
not at all	0
a little	3
moderately	6
significantly	9
greatly	12

Water-Saving Landscaping Tips

Xeriscaping is an innovative strategy that significantly reduces lawn and landscaping water usage and prevents pollution from unnecessary use of fertilizers and the like.

The xeriscape approach takes into account planning and design, soil and turf area analysis, suitable plant selections, efficient irrigation practices and systems, and the use of mulches.



Resources

- [Xeriscaping Tips from PageWise](#) — Types of plants to use when xeriscaping your yards and gardens
- [Xeriscaping Tips from California Integrated Waste Management Board](#)

Action Question 2 – Reduced-Flow Devices

I have installed low-flow shower heads and low-volume flush devices on my toilets.

Choices	Add
None of the above is true	0
One of the above is true	1
Two of the above are true	2
This is true of all of my showers and toilets	3

Tips on Reduced-Flow Devices

Faucet aerators reduce flow by 50% yet maintain good pressure and cost just a few dollars apiece. Look for devices that deliver 0.5-1 gallon per minute.

A low-flow shower head uses no more than 2.5 gallons per minute at standard residential water pressure. This represents about a 50% reduction in water use compared to a standard shower head. A low-flow shower head costs about \$10-\$20 but pays for itself in just a few months.

Action Question 3 – Water-Saving Technologies

I have invested _____ in water-saving technologies such as gray water systems and ultra-low-flow toilets.

Choices	Add
nothing or very little	0
a little	2
moderately	4
extensively	6
very extensively	8

Tips on Water-Saving Technologies

A gray water system utilizes rinse water from the house for watering lawns and gardens.

An ultra-low-flow toilet uses no more than 1.6 gallons of water per flush. Composting toilets are another alternative.

Resources

- [Real Goods Trading Company](#)
 - **Gray water systems** – search for "grey" (with an 'e')
 - **Toilet stuff** – search for 'toilet'

Action Question 4 – Personal Habits

I make _____ effort to conserve water by doing such things as minimizing my shower flow and flushing every other time I use the toilet.

Choices	Add
no or very little	0
some	1
a moderately good	2
a really good	3
a great	4



Resources

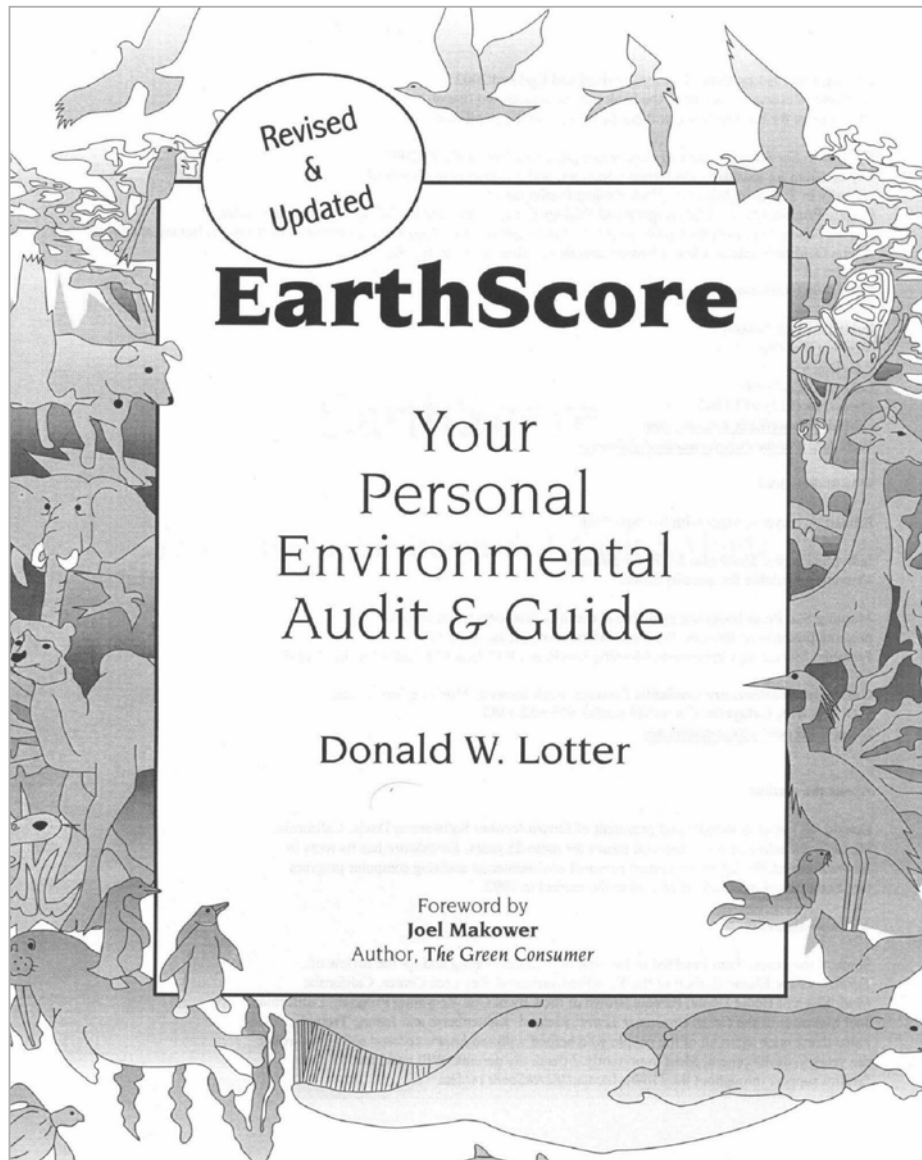
- "[Fifty Ways to Be Water Smart](#)" (home water conservation tips from South Florida Water Management District)

Action Scoring

Add together your scores from the four Action questions and see where you fall in the Action rating scheme.

0-2	You could do better.
3-7	You are good.
8-13	You are very good.
14-26	You are excellent!
27 or more	You are awesome!!

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