

HOW RESTAURANTS CAN LOWER THEIR WATER AND ENERGY BILLS



- Make sure that water-cooled refrigeration and ice-making equipment is well maintained. If at all possible, replace water-cooled equipment with air-cooled equipment. Refrigeration and ice-making equipment, which uses “once-through” city water for cooling, is usually the largest water consumer in any food-related business. When this equipment works properly, it does its job but uses hundreds of gallons of water a day. Often, the valve that controls the flow of water (and shuts it off when the compressor is not working) fails, causing water to flow 24 hours a day. Having the equipment checked and maintained can prevent very high water bills. DEP has a separate brochure, “Once-Through Water-Cooled Refrigeration” that provides more detailed information. If the restaurant has its own water meter, check to see if there’s movement at closing time after clean-up. If the leak detection dial is moving, you have some kind of continuous leak.
- Install flow-restricting aerators on all faucets so they flow at no more than two gallons per minute. For faucets, which are used for filling pots, a fingertip control valve can be used to switch between aerated and full flow. Instruct kitchen staff to use full flow only when truly required.
- Install hands-free or foot-activated pedals for faucets or automatic shutoff valves.
- Use low-flow pre-rinse valves for automatic dishwashers.
- Serve water to customers only when they request it. This is required by regulation, even outside of a drought emergency.
- Try to eliminate or minimize the use of flowing water to defrost food. If flowing water is legally required to defrost food, use the minimum flow possible.
- Equip hoses used to wash down the kitchen with a self-closing nozzle that flows at no more than five gallons per minute.

- Run dishwashers and other equipment only with full loads whenever possible.
- Request a free restaurant water audit from DEP. These will be offered on a pilot basis beginning Spring 2005.
- Replace incandescent exit signs with LED or compact fluorescent types. Replace incandescent fixtures with compact fluorescents.
- When purchasing a new clothes washer, buy an EnergyStar-rated product. When buying a new dishwasher, look for models with reduced water use.
- Replace older toilets with 1.6-gallon toilets. Pressure-assisted models are best for commercial occupancies.
- Vacuum air conditioning and refrigeration coils at least twice a year.

For more information, visit www.nyc.gov/dep and www.getenergysmart.org



Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg
Acting Commissioner David B. Tweedy

New York City Department of Environmental Protection
59-17 Junction Blvd., Flushing, NY 11373
Dial 311 for all non-emergency City services