

# Water use in commercial kitchens

## Waterwise Business Information Sheet

### Water management options

Studies indicate that about half of the water used in restaurants is used in kitchens. The major water using fixtures are dishwashers and ice machines. Food preparation and cleaning make up the balance of water used.

### Water saving tips

#### **Dishwashing:**

- Scrape, rather than rinse, dishes and utensils before loading into dishwasher.
- Alternatively, pre-soak utensils and other items in sinks rather than rinsing under running water before loading into dishwasher.
- Install spray rinsers for pot washing and reduce flow of spray rinsers for prewash.
- Ensure water pressure and flows to dishwasher are set at the minimum required settings.
- Turn off dishwashers when not in use.
- Wash full loads only.
- Replace spray nozzles with water efficient types.
- Install electric eye sensors for conveyer dishwashers.
- Install new water and energy efficient dishwashers when renovating.

#### **Ice machines**

- Adjust ice machines to produce only the required amount of ice.
- Alternatively buy ice from commercial vendors.
- Some ice machines are cooled via 'once through' cooling water. Consider a closed circuit cooling system, or replacement with air cooled models.



### Food preparation

- Do not use running water to thaw foods; defrost frozen goods in refrigerator.
- Wash fruits and vegetables in a filled basin, not under running water.
- Alternatively, consider purchasing fruits, vegetables and salad ingredients in 'ready to serve' form to avoid cleaning and preparation wash.
- Purchase drinks in ready to use form (canned or bottled) to reduce amounts of water used for drink preparation.

#### **Food service:**

- Alternatively have waiters serve water from jugs to prevent half empty bottles or carafes of water being discarded.
- Turn off continuous flow to wash drain trays of postmix drink machines; clean trays as needed.

#### **Cleaning up:**

- Reduce or eliminate nightly hosing in kitchen areas where mopping will provide adequate sanitation.
- Send laundry to commercial facilities.
- Use squeegees or brooms to remove surface and floor residuals/debris before washing with water.