

World Water Day

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In 1993, the United Nations officially declared March 22nd of each year as World Water Day. World Water Day is centered on taking action to deal with the water crisis. “Today there are over 663 million people living without a safe water supply close to home, spending countless hours queuing or trekking to distant sources, and coping with the health impacts of using contaminated water” (worldwaterday.org).

This year’s theme for World Water Day is Wastewater, prompting the question “why waste water?”

Across the globe, the majority of wastewater (80%) from residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural sources flows back into the environment without proper treatment or being reused (worldwaterday.org). This year’s campaign urges us to reduce our water use and reuse wastewater when we can. We are fortunate to live in an area where our water is plentiful and clean, but as environmental stewards it is our responsibility to maintain that bounty of clean water for today and for the next seven generations.

Reduce your use! Saving water, and \$\$\$, can be done by simply being mindful of your consumption and getting into the habit of conserving. Below are some facts and tips from WaterSense, an EPA Partnership Program (www.epa.gov/watersense) to help you conserve.

- The average American family of 4 uses about 400 gallons of water per day.
- Newer toilets on average use 1.6 gallons per flush, while older toilets can use between 3.5 and 7 gallons per flush. TIP: replace older model toilets.
- Running toilets can waste about 200 gallons every day. TIP: fix leaks!
- Bathroom faucets use an average of 2 gallons per minute. TIPS: turn off the tap while brushing your teeth or shaving, this alone can save an average of 200 gallons of water per month! As with leaky toilets, fixing leaky faucets can also be a huge water saver.
- Standard shower heads use 2.5 gallons per minute and also require energy to heat water.

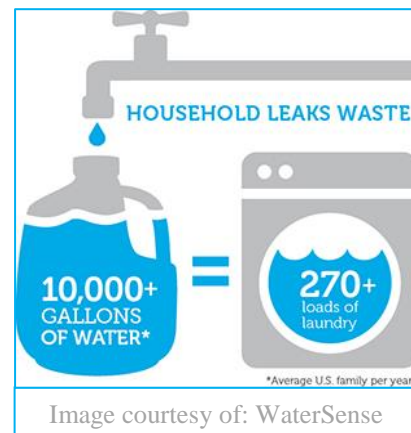


Image courtesy of: WaterSense

Replacing just one showerhead with an efficient one can save the average family 2,900 of water per year, plus enough energy savings to power your home for 13 days! TIP: replace old showerheads, and take shorter showers!

- Washing dishes with an open tap can use up to 20 gallons of water. TIPS: filling the sink or a bowl can save at least 10 gallons. Skipping rinsing dishes before loading them into the dishwasher can save an additional 10 gallons.
- Older washing machines can use anywhere from 27 to 54 gallons of water per load. Newer, efficient models use less than 27 gallons per load.
- TIP: Keeping a pitcher of water in the refrigerator saves you time and water instead of running the tap until the water gets cold.
- Of the estimated 29 billion gallons of water used daily by households in the United States, nearly 9 billion gallons (30%) is devoted to outdoor water use. TIPS: install rain barrels at your gutter outlets for a plant watering source. Sweep driveways and sidewalks rather than hosing them off. Wash your car with water from a bucket, or utilize a commercial carwash that recycles water.

Reuse! Greywater is gently used water from sinks, showers, tubs, and washing machines; it is not water that has come into contact with feces (toilet water). Here are some easy ways to reuse greywater on a daily basis:

- Save unused drinking water. Instead of throwing away that partial bottle of water (a reusable bottle of course, because plastic bottled water is wasteful) that's been lying around, water your plants with it, let your pets drink it, or refrigerate it and drink it yourself.
- Place a bucket in the sink or shower while you're waiting for the water to warm up; again, you can water your plants with it, let your pets drink it, drink it yourself, or you can even use it to flush your toilets by pouring the water directly into the bowl. For baths, siphon or scoop the water out of the tub!
- Place a bucket in your kitchen sink and wash your fruits and veggies above it, and wash your dishes in it as well. You can then use the water to water plants, pour it in your compost pile, or flush the toilet. Note: small amounts of soap in the garden can actually help control pests, but check your label to make sure you are not putting hazardous chemicals out in the environment!
- Capture rinse water from your washing machine (plumbing work required), run it through a filtration system to remove any potential harmful chemicals from your laundry detergent, and use it for plant watering. Again, be sure that you are not putting chemicals into the environment!

Check out the 2017 World Water Day Factsheet and learn more.

How Much Water Do You Use?

In Everyday Products???



In the Bathroom???



Outside ???



10 minutes hand washing dishes



In the Kitchen???



In the Laundry Room???

