



# Water use in your home

Tips to help save water



South Staffs Water

# Save water, save money and help the environment.

Each of our customers uses around 150 litres of water a day. But, water is a precious resource and we all need to do something to minimise waste. Whatever your reasons for wanting to cut down, we can help by giving you information and advice.

If your water is metered, you'll want to reduce waste to keep bills as low as possible. If you're property is unmetered, you may want to stop waste to reduce the impact on the environment.

Energy from fossil fuel power stations is used to treat and distribute water, contributing to our carbon footprint. Using water more efficiently not only reduces the amount of water wasted but also helps to reduce the amount of carbon released into the atmosphere. If we all use water wisely, we can also help reduce the amount taken from rivers and underground sources.

One of the easiest ways to make the most of potential benefits is to reduce the amount of hot water used at home. By reducing the length of time spent in the shower or the depth of water in your bath, less hot water is used and therefore you save the energy we use to pump and treat the water, as well as saving the electricity or gas used to heat the water in your home.

We're doing our bit too. We are working hard not only to reduce leaks, but also to promote the efficient use of water among our customers and in our own processes.

Reducing consumption is easier than you think and can be done without compromising health and hygiene. There are a number of simple measures that can be taken to reduce how much water appliances use or by making small lifestyle changes in how we use water.

You may not realise just how much water you use every day. The following pages and the table at the back will identify what can be done and offer help and advice on water efficiency in the home and garden.

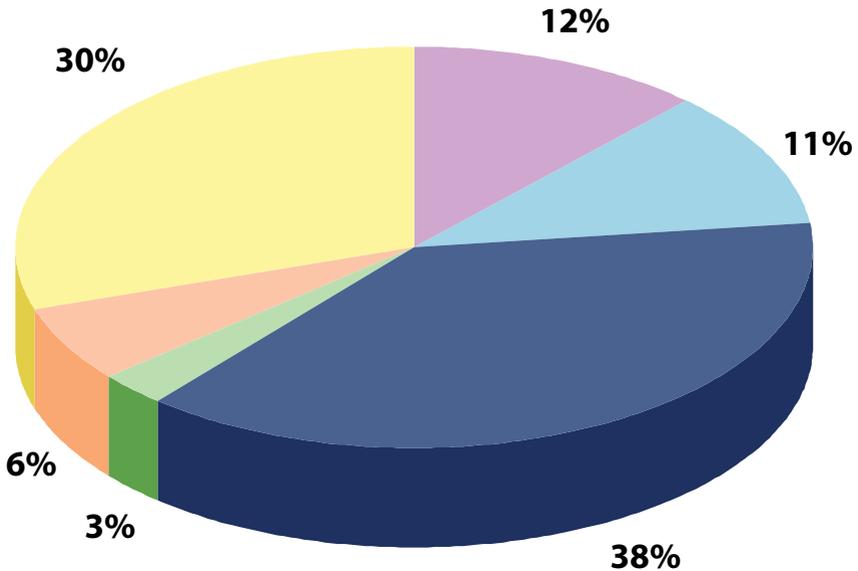


**Did you know?**  
Look out for these symbols for helpful facts about water efficiency.

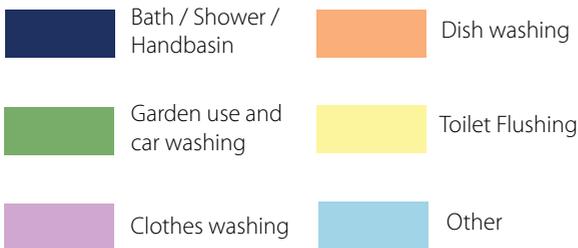
# How do we use water?

In today's home, we use water in lots of ways. Some are very obvious, for example washing and drinking. Some are less obvious e.g. leaks, dripping taps, window cleaning, watering of houseplants, etc.

The chart shown below illustrates water use in a typical home:



## Key:



## Did you know?

That the energy used to supply water to your home in a year could boil enough water to make 12,000 mugs of tea!

# How can you save water?

Some general hints and tips that may help:

## Bathing and showering

- A full bath uses up to 80 litres of water whereas a five minute power shower uses about 75 litres. So, provided you don't take too long under the shower, water can still be saved.
- A five minute normal shower saves the most water, only using about 45 litres and so saves up to 35 litres when compared to a full bath. Remember, running the shower before you step in also wastes a lot of water and energy. In addition, fitting an aerated showerhead or flow restrictor will reduce flow while keeping the pressure steady. (Further information towards the back of this booklet)

## Toilets

- New toilets are designed to use less water per flush, but in older, larger capacity cisterns, you can reduce the amount of water used when flushing by fitting a 'Hippo' device or a 'Save-a-flush' bag. However, when used in more modern toilets the 'Hippo' device may give rise to a need for double-flushing. Remove the 'Hippo' device immediately if this occurs and try using a 'Save-a-flush' device instead as they displace less water. (Further information available towards the back of this booklet)

## Brushing your teeth

- Remember to turn off the tap while you are actually brushing your teeth. A running tap uses 6 litres of water per minute. If you brush your teeth as recommended for two minutes, that's around 12 litres saved each time. Twice a day that's 24 litres saved per person. A family of four could save nearly 100 litres of water per day! That's equivalent to around £31.00 saved per year if you're on a meter.

## Washing

- Remembering to put the plug in your washbasin can save about 2 litres of water each time you wash your hands and/or face.

### Did you know?

About a third of all clean drinkable water we use in our homes is flushed down a toilet!



# in the bathroom...

## Washing clothes and dishes

- If you are thinking of buying a new washing machine or dishwasher, look out for energy efficient models to replace them. Most now use cold fill only in order to save on energy costs.
- It's better to wait until you have a full load before switching on, as one full load generally uses less water than two half-loads. Quick washes in washing machines, however, generally take more energy as the heating element works harder over short time, but quick wash cycles in dishwashers use less energy.
- When hand washing dirty pots, you can save around 5 litres of water by using a bowl, rather than just running a tap. If you only have a few pots, you could get away with only half filling the bowl – or save them until you have enough for a bowl full.

## Preparing food

- Clean and peel veg in a bowl of water, instead of under a running tap. You can work out how much water is wasted by calculating how long it takes multiplied by 6 litres per minute. Plus you can make use of the water in the garden – if you don't need it straightaway, collect the water in a butt or watering can.
- Waste disposal units use a lot of water to wash away food waste. You can make better use of your food waste by putting peelings in a compost heap.

## Drinking water

- Running the tap until the water is cold enough to drink wastes around 4 litres each time – you could collect this water for garden or houseplant watering or washing up.
- When boiling the kettle only fill with the water you need, ensuring the element is fully covered. This will save on energy costs too.
- You might want to think about fitting aerator nozzles to your taps. These reduce the flow of the water, without reducing pressure.



in the kitchen...

### Did you know?

Running a tap until the water is cold wastes about 4 litres each time, why not keep a jug of water in the fridge.

## Drips and leaks

- If you have any dripping taps replace the washers immediately. A drip every second uses 4 litres of water in a day.
- For leaking overflows, adjust the ball valves. If that doesn't stop the leak, replace the washers in the ball valves.
- It's a good idea to regularly check your stop tap to ensure it isn't leaking and that it will operate if you need to use it in an emergency.
- Ensure that everyone in your home knows the location of the stop tap and keep the name and telephone number of a local plumber handy.
- If you suspect a leak have it checked and repaired immediately. Not only will you save water but you may also avoid damage to your property caused by the leak.

## Cold weather

- Cold weather can play havoc with pipes sometimes causing bursts during the freeze/thaw cycle. Good insulation, especially in unheated parts of your home, e.g. loft etc., will lessen the chance of this happening.

### Did you know?

A dripping tap can waste almost enough water in a day to fill a bath.



in the home...

## Washing your car

- Using a hosepipe to wash your car uses a lot of water. Much of this falls on the ground and is wasted - pressure washers waste even more. Instead, use a bucket when shampooing and a watering can for rinsing.
- If you must use a hosepipe, ensure that it is fitted with a trigger nozzle that will stop the flow of water when it's released.

## Checking your supply pipe for leaks

- Regularly check for hissing noises or damp patches that may appear within the grounds of your property. These may indicate leaking pipes.
- If you have a water meter check for leaks by conducting a flow test. All you need to do is take a meter reading, ensure no water is being used in the house, then take one again 10 or 15 minutes later. If the reading has gone up, then you could have a leak.
- As a property owner you are responsible for the repair and replacement costs of the supply pipe which serves your property. You may be entitled to some assistance with the cost from us. Please contact our Supply Line on **0800 389 1011** for further information.



outside the home...

### Did you know?

You can monitor your water use, and potentially reduce waste and save money by having a water meter fitted free of charge!

## Saving water in the garden

- Collecting rainwater in a water butt could save in the region of 5,000 litres of water a year! Find out where to buy a low-cost water butt at the back of this booklet.
- Use a watering can rather than a hosepipe, directing water straight to the roots of your plants where it will be most effective.
- Don't water your plants or lawns in direct sunlight; not only will you risk scorching your plants but you'll also lose a lot of water through evaporation, so your plants and lawns won't benefit from it anyway.
- If you must use a hosepipe ensure it's fitted with a trigger nozzle that will stop the flow of water when you release it.
- Use mulch to cover the soil in your flowerbeds. It holds water, helps to keep your soil moist and keeps weeds down. It also reduces the effects of evaporation, so less mains water is needed to keep your plants healthy.
- Think about planting drought resistant and low water-use plants and grasses.
- During the summer, let your grass grow a little longer between cutting – it can live through long dry periods without you having to water it. Too much watering actually weakens a lawn.

### Did you know?

If you use sprinkler or unattended hosepipe then you should have a meter fitted.



in the garden...

# Further Information

## Do you want to know more about South Staffs Water?

You can find out more about the services we offer to our customers on our website: [www.south-staffs-water.co.uk](http://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk).

## Do you have a water meter?

You might save yourself money as well as reducing your water usage by having a meter fitted. If within a year you don't notice a reduction in your bills compared to paying at rateable value, you can choose to revert back. For more information go to: [www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/your\\_home/water\\_meters.asp](http://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/your_home/water_meters.asp)

## Want to save water in the bathroom?

We have teamed up with energy company, E.ON and Save Water Save Money to offer you **FREE OF CHARGE**, a water saving device for your toilet, or an E.ON ShowerSave device (not suitable for electric showers or powershowers). Ring Save Water Save Money direct on **0845 371 16 89** or go to our website: [www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/your\\_home/free\\_water\\_saving\\_devices.asp](http://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/your_home/free_water_saving_devices.asp)

## Do you want to fit a water butt?

This is a great way to save water in the garden and our preferred supplier is offering our customers great discounts if you buy one from them. Contact them on: **0845 130 6363** or go to their website on: [www.ssw2u.com](http://www.ssw2u.com)

## If you spot a leak from our mains?

Let us know by ringing our free leakline on: **0800 389 10 11**, or through our website: [www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/forms/report\\_a\\_leak.asp](http://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/forms/report_a_leak.asp)

## What else can you do?

Encourage your family, friends and colleagues to be more efficient with their use of water. Plus, you can see how well you're doing and what more you could do by going through the checklist on the next page, then work out just how much water is being used in your house using the table at the back.



# Are you water wise?

By using less water, your bill will be lower if you have a meter. If you don't have a meter, you can still make savings on your energy bills by using less hot water. Either way, you're helping the environment at the same time.

Tick the boxes to find out how you're doing. Those left un-ticked show things you can do to make savings. So, do you...

## In the bathroom

- Shower rather than take a bath
- Use a standard shower, not a Power Shower
- Shower in under five minutes
- Use a water-saving device in your older toilet cistern, or, use the low-volume flush on a newer dual-flush cistern
- Use a glass of water to rinse when cleaning your teeth, instead of leaving the tap running
- Put a plug in the basin rather than leaving the tap running

## In the kitchen

- Wait until the washing machine or dishwasher is full before switching them on
- Look out for low water-use models when buying a new washer or dishwasher
- Use a bowl to wash dishes by hand rather than leaving the tap running
- Use a bowl to clean and peel veg or salad rather than running the tap
- Throw vegetable waste onto a compost heap, not down a waste disposal unit

- Keep a jug or bottle of water in the fridge, rather than running the tap until it's cold
- Only boil enough water for what you need each time

## Around the home

- Make sure taps aren't dripping
- Check that water isn't running from overflows
- Know where the stop tap is and check it works
- Make sure pipes and tanks are insulated

## Outside the home

- Wash the car using a bucket of water
- Have a trigger nozzle fitted on a hosepipe
- Collect rainwater in a butt
- Use mulch on the garden to reduce evaporation
- Water plants in the evening or early morning
- Use a watering can rather than a hose
- Plant drought resistant plants and grasses

## How much water do you use?

You can get an idea of how much water is being used in your house by using the table below. Base your figures on a typical week in your household and you will need to multiply the figures in the second and third columns together to find your weekly total.

A Daily Activity	B Average Usage (l)	C Uses per week	D Weekly Total (l)
<i>Example: Bath</i>	<i>80 litres per bath</i>	<i>x 28</i>	<i>= 2240</i>
Bath	80 litres per bath	x	=
Standard Shower	45 litres per 5 minute shower	x	=
Power Shower	75 litres per 5 minute shower	x	=
Toilet Flush	7.5 litres per flush	x	=
Teeth Cleaning	6 litres per clean	x	=
Hand/Face Washing	2 litres per clean	x	=
Washing Machine	85 litres per load	x	=
Dishwasher	42 litres per load	x	=
Food Preparation	15 litres per occasion	x	=
Washing up by hand	15 litres per occasion	x	=
<b>Total weekly use by your household</b>			=
Divide by 7 to find your household's average daily water consumption			=
Divide by the number of members in your household to find each person's average daily water consumption			=
Add 25 litres for miscellaneous* use of water			=
Total average daily water consumption per person			=

**The average consumption within our area of supply is 150 litres per person per day. How do you compare? What could you do to reduce your water consumption?**

\* MISCELLANEOUS USE - This includes Waste Disposal, Garden Watering, Car Washing, Indoor and Outdoor Cleaning, House Plant Watering, Dripping Taps and Leaks.

**Did you know?**  
By using water wisely you may also save energy and reduce fuel bills.

If you wish to contact South Staffs Water please visit our website at:  
**[www.south-staffs-water.co.uk](http://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk)**

Alternatively, you could write to us at:

South Staffs Water  
Green Lane, Walsall, West Midlands WS2 7PD