

## General Water Facts

- Water is a finite resource—even though about 70 percent of the Earth's surface is covered by water, less than 1 percent is available for human use.
- Thirty-six states are projecting water shortages between now and 2013, according to the Government Accountability Office.
- Between 1950 and 2000, the U.S. population increased nearly 90 percent while water demand increased more than 200 percent.
- Each American uses an average of 100 gallons of water per day at home.
- The average household spends as much as \$500 a year on its water and sewer bill and can save about \$132 per year by doing a few simple things to use water more efficiently.
- Each average household that fully adopts water-efficient products and practices saves 30,000 gallons per year—enough to supply a year of drinking water for 150 thirsty neighbors.

Estimated savings potential for initial WaterSense product areas—high-efficiency toilets, faucets, and irrigation controllers—based on a 10-percent replacement of existing fixtures, is estimated to be more than 150 billion gallons per year, or almost twice the annual rainfall of Seattle, Washington.

## High-Efficiency Toilet Facts

- Toilets account for approximately 30 percent of residential indoor water consumption—by far the main source of water use in the home.
- The average person flushes the toilet 5.1 times per day.
- Replacing a pre-1994 toilet with a new high-efficiency model can reduce water used for toilets by at least 60 percent and save about 16 percent of total indoor water use. Savings for a typical household would be more than 10,000 gallons per year—enough to fill a backyard swimming pool!
- If all toilets that use 3.5 gallons per flush or more in U.S. homes were converted to high-efficiency models, we could save more than 900 billion gallons of water per year—equal to approximately two weeks of flow over Niagara Falls.

## Irrigation Facts and Tips

- Thirty percent of water used by the average American household is devoted to outdoor water use, and more than half of that is used for watering lawns and gardens.
- More than 50 percent of residential irrigation water is lost due to evaporation, runoff, overwatering, or improper system design/installation/maintenance.

- Automatic timers might be convenient but can increase water waste. Residences with automatic timers use more water than residences without timers: irrigation systems use 47 percent more, in-ground sprinklers use 35 percent more, garden systems use 30 percent more, and drip irrigation systems use 16 percent more.
- Weather-based irrigation controllers can reduce water use by 20 percent compared to conventional equipment, potentially saving more than 24 billion gallons per year across the United States—approximately equal to more than 7,000 hoses running non-stop for a full year.
- The best time to water your yard is early morning, when winds are calm and temperatures are cool.
- Grass doesn't need to be watered every day; make sure your lawn really needs it before irrigating. If you can stick a screwdriver into your lawn easily—don't water!
- Using native plants that require less watering and are adapted to your climate can reduce outdoor water use by 20 to 50 percent.

### Other Household Water Facts and Tips

- Household water leaks account for 12 percent of homeowners' water bills. Retrofitting a household with new high-efficiency fixtures decreases these easily corrected leaks by approximately 70 percent.
- Leaks can account for large amounts of water wasted in the home—more than 11,000 gallons per year, which is enough to fill a backyard swimming pool!
- A running tap can use about 2 gallons of water per minute. Keep drinking water in the refrigerator instead of letting the faucet run until cool.
- A bathroom faucet can use 2 gallons of water per minute. By turning off the tap while brushing your teeth or shaving, you can save up to 240 gallons of water per month.
- If everyone in your household reduced the length of their shower by 1 minute, the resulting savings would be more than 1,600 gallons—enough water for a family of four to wash their dishes for a year.
- Constantly running the faucet while washing dishes for 10 minutes can use up to 20 gallons of water. If you fill the basin with a few gallons of wash water and then rinse the dishes all together at the end, you could save 10 gallons of water.
- Installing a water-efficient washing machine could reduce an average home's water use by 5,000 gallons. If 10 percent of homes upgraded to water-efficient washing machines, it would save more than 45 billion gallons of water.
- You can find water efficiency and conservation programs for your state at [www.epa.gov/watersense/where.htm](http://www.epa.gov/watersense/where.htm).