



Ollscoil Chathair
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City University

Water Institute

Water, A Resource Less Valued



Water, A Resource Less Valued

Water is the most precious commodity in the world, but it is not the most valued. We are wasting water. All of us, everywhere on the planet. In Ireland we might live in a wet climate, but our management of this invaluable resource needs to be improved – urgently – because too much of it runs down the drain. Every household needs to transform its water use for the sake of our children.

According to reports on gathered data Irish people use on average 120-130 litres of water per person per day. This is lower than the EU average, but still higher than the level of 100 litres per person per day that we would like to see because our resources are struggling to meet demand. We are asking everyone to try and use only what they need.

The amount of water you use depends on your family circumstances, the kind of home you live in and even what you do for a living. But everyone can play a big role in reducing usage and this has huge benefits.



Irish Households Use Too Much Water. Or Do They?

In a typical home, almost 50% of all the water you use indoors is in the bathroom. This makes it a great place to start saving water. Toilet flushing, showering and bathing and teeth brushing are the everyday things we use water for in the bathroom.

The Shower

Taking a 20-minute shower sounds like a really long time – though it is not unusual. Reports suggest that 10 minutes and no longer, is good for our health. Shorter, cooler showers are generally better for your skin. Overusing soap or showering in hot water can negatively impact your skin and hair. An average shower uses about 10 litres of water per minute. Showers are responsible for 30% of our water use. Some showers can use a lot of water, particularly power showers. A very simple shower timer can be used to help reduce the time you spend in the shower. Taking shorter showers is one of the best ways to help save water.



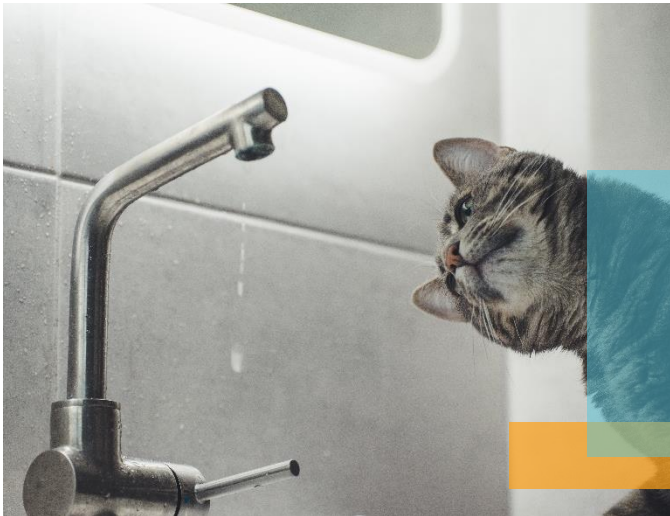
The Toilet

There are a number of affordable and easy-to-use water saving devices that can help save water in homes. Some might choose to use a toilet cistern bag. This is a device that fits in the water cistern of your toilet and is filled with water which causes it to expand and displace volume in the tank. This means that every time you flush the toilet, less water is used. Some toilets are fitted with dual flushing systems. This gives people the option to use a smaller amount or volume of water per flush instead of the full flush volume all the time, in order to save water. Most modern toilets are fitted with a dual flush system, but they can also be retrofitted to existing systems.

The Sink

Sometimes in order to wash dishes in the sink we leave the tap running, wasting litres and litres of water. It is always better to place a basin in the sink or plug the sink and wash all the dishes together and then rinse. Rinse water could even be used to water plants. Also, it saves up to 6 litres of water per minute if we turn off the tap when brushing teeth or shaving. By keeping a jug of tap water in the fridge, a cool drink is at hand rather than running the tap until the water reaches the temperature you like. This could save up to 10 litres of water per day.

Remember too that it is better to run the washing machine and dishwasher with full loads and save both water and energy.



Bottled Water

Many people buy bottled water because they are not keen on drinking the water from their tap for a variety of reasons. What they don't realise is that many of the bottled waters have gone through a similar treatment process as our tap water. So why are we buying it in bottles – adding to our waste and probably exposing ourselves to leaching chemicals from the plastic. The technology and energy involved in providing good quality water to the tap means that we want to encourage people to get “back to tap”.

The 100 Litre Goal

To aim for 100 litres per person per day would mean we need to have short showers, save on flushing the loo by investing in a dual-flush loo or a cistern bag. The kitchen tap and dishwasher account for about 12% per cent of water used in the home, so, if you wash up by hand use a bowl, or put your dishwasher in economy mode. And finally, let's all drink tap water.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

6 CLEAN WATER
AND SANITATION



9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE



10 REDUCED
INEQUALITIES



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES
AND COMMUNITIES



12 RESPONSIBLE
CONSUMPTION
AND PRODUCTION



 DCU Water Institute

 dcuwater

E: waterinstitute@dcu.ie

www.dcuwater.ie