

# YOUR EFFORT

We all consume water and create waste. In fact, the average American uses 176 gallons of water and contributes between 66 and 192 gallons of wastewater to the system each day. Every drop that enters our homes and businesses is treated and discharged back into the water cycle to be reused and recycled. Water conservation and stewardship starts with you! You can conserve water in small ways that make a big difference to preserve, protect, and prevent water waste.

## Did you know?

- Nearly 95% of your water footprint is hidden in the food you eat, energy you use, products you buy, and the services upon which you rely.
- The water it takes to produce the average American diet alone—approximately 1,000 gallons per person per day—is more than the global average water footprint of 900 gallons per person per day for diet, household use, transportation, energy and the consumption of material goods.<sup>1</sup>
- What's the worst water consumer in your household? The toilet! As much as 19.5 gallons of water per day per person is used just flushing the toilet alone.<sup>2</sup>
- An American taking a 5-minute shower uses more water than the average person in a developing country uses for an entire day.<sup>3</sup>
- If all U.S. households installed water-saving features, water use would decrease by 30%. This would save an estimated 5.4 billion gallons of water per day.<sup>4</sup>
- The average American household uses only 10% of the treated water that comes out of the faucet for drinking and cooking. The rest is flushed down the toilet or drain. The growing use of recycled wastewater for irrigation, landscaping, industry and toilet flushing, is a good way to conserve our fresh water resources.<sup>5</sup>

- Recycled water can be used to replenish sensitive ecosystems, recharge groundwater aquifers, and in some cases, is further treated to drinking water standards.<sup>5</sup>
- The term "toilet to tap" is misleading because recycled water that ends up in drinking water undergoes extensive and thorough purification. In addition, it is usually added to groundwater or surface water for further cleansing before being sent to a drinking water supply where it is again treated.<sup>5</sup>
- A few countries like Singapore, Australia and Namibia, and states such as California, Virginia and New Mexico already are drinking recycled water, demonstrating that purified wastewater can be safe and clean, and help ease water shortages.<sup>5</sup>

## Small actions can make a BIG difference.

- Make a lake every day! If everyone in the United States flushed the toilet just one less time per day, we could save enough water every single day to create a lake that is a mile long, a mile wide and four feet deep.<sup>7</sup>
- If everyone in the United States used just one less gallon of water per shower every day, we could save 85 billion gallons per year.<sup>2</sup>
- The average shower is 8 minutes. Try reducing to 5-minute showers, 5 days a week. Use a timer to set a limit and stick to it!

- Installing a low-flow showerhead takes only minutes. Low-flow means it uses 2.5 gallons per minute. You'll never notice a difference in water pressure, but you'll cut your water use and your water heating bills.
- Turn off the tap! You can save as much as 3,000 gallons of water per year water if you just turn off the tap while brushing your teeth and washing your hands.<sup>2</sup>
- Nip the drip! Fixing leaky plumbing can save up to 10 gallons of water per day!<sup>2</sup>
- Read and understand your water and wastewater bill.

## You need water. Water needs you.

Indispensable to jobs, the economy, our health and our communities, water runs through our lives in many ways. Everyone uses water and everyone is responsible for it.

We must all work together to keep our water clean and healthy. To do that, we each need to learn to value water. To learn more, visit [www.WatersWorthIt.org](http://www.WatersWorthIt.org).

BE AS GOOD TO WATER AS WATER'S BEEN TO YOU.  
**WATER'S WORTH IT.**<sup>®</sup>



[www.WatersWorthIt.org](http://www.WatersWorthIt.org)

1. National Geographic, Water Footprint Calculator. Retrieved on May 23, 2013 from <http://environment.nationalgeographic.com/environment/refreshwater/water-footprint-calculator/>. 2. US F&E, Figure and Folio of Water Conservation. Retrieved on May 23, 2013 from <http://waterfcof.com/waterfcof/TradeInfo/119>. 3. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2006, Human Development Report 2006, Beyond Quality of Life: poverty and the global water crisis. © American Water Works Association. Retrieved on May 23, 2013 from [http://www.aawwa.org/~/media/Files/Reports/2006\\_Human\\_Development\\_Report\\_2006\\_Beyond\\_Quality\\_of\\_Life\\_poverty\\_and\\_the\\_global\\_water\\_crisis.pdf](http://www.aawwa.org/~/media/Files/Reports/2006_Human_Development_Report_2006_Beyond_Quality_of_Life_poverty_and_the_global_water_crisis.pdf). 4. American Water Works Association. Retrieved on May 23, 2013 from [http://www.aawwa.org/~/media/Files/Reports/2006\\_Human\\_Development\\_Report\\_2006\\_Beyond\\_Quality\\_of\\_Life\\_poverty\\_and\\_the\\_global\\_water\\_crisis.pdf](http://www.aawwa.org/~/media/Files/Reports/2006_Human_Development_Report_2006_Beyond_Quality_of_Life_poverty_and_the_global_water_crisis.pdf). 5. CWI, News, March 1, 2011, From Wastewater to Drinking Water (Web log). Retrieved on May 23, 2013 from <http://blogs.cwi.com/entry/2011/03/01/04-from-wastewater-to-drinking-water/>.