

No Water No Life®

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO SAVE OUR FRESHWATER RESOURCES

Threats to our freshwater resources can sound dismal... **but – there's good news.** We can reduce consumption and make a difference using a guitar, a green thumb, art and especially – enthusiasm! We can start new habits! Africans use 5 to 13 gallons of water/day on average. Europeans use 30 gallons/day. But in North America, we use 150 gallons / person / day on average. We must use LESS! Think about how you currently use water, THEN follow some of these ideas!

INSIDE

- Cut your shower time in half – or.... Shower with a friend and use low-flow showerheads
- Place a bucket in the shower to collect water for your plants while you wash
- Turn water off while you brush your teeth
- Run the dishwasher only when it's full
- Make sure you have no leaks or dripping faucets
- Avoid flushing when the water is just yellow and use low-flow toilets
- Recycle your shower water, kitchen sink water, etc. for lawns, gardens
- Delay doing laundry or showering during a storm to reduce urban storm-water runoff
- Take unused medications to your town's Alternative Medicine Cabinet for safe disposal

OUTSIDE

- Reduce use of pesticides and fertilizers (compost instead!)
- Don't dump garbage down storm drains or in waterways
- Don't toss cigarette butts in the street – they are non-biodegradable
- Compost leaves and yard waste
- Direct gutters and spouts away from paved surfaces to reduce runoff into storm drains
- Wash cars on unpaved ground so soap won't flow into storm drains, and use a bucket not a hose
- Check your car for oil leaks that might wash away into waterways
- Recycle motor oil – don't toss it!
- Clean up your pets' waste
- Have your septic tank and septic system inspected regularly
- Plant trees and drought-tolerant, native vegetation
- Use drip irrigation rather than sprinklers; and don't water the sidewalk!
- Use rain barrels and use that water to wash your car and water your plants
- Sweep your sidewalks, patios and driveways, rather than hosing them down

AS A CONSUMER

- Buy low-flow toilets and showerheads
- Buy appliances built to conserve water and energy
- Buy a water filter if needed, not individual plastic bottles of water

AS AN ASSET MANAGER Water is a household asset to be managed just like your property, your car, your children's educational funds or your IRA.

Contribute what you can to stewardship agencies
Invest in green funds

GET YOUR COMMUNITY INVOLVED

Organize and join river, pond and highway Clean-Up Days to remove trash and pollutants
Monitor your water quality – this can be done by school groups, clubs, etc.
Enhance access points for fishing, boating, camping, photography....
Restore riparian areas and establish riparian buffer zones to minimize flooding
Plan educational walks and paddle trips
Organize a "Save our Water" concert
Start an Alternative Medicine Cabinet in your town for safe disposal of unused medicine

USE THE PRIVILEGES OF CITIZENSHIP

Request low-flow showerheads and toilets in public places, hotels, gyms, etc.
Ask your local water company to install differentiated pipes to return recycled water for usage in laundry – toilets – gardens – even drinking water! (Orange County, CA, did this back in 1976. Even black water can be treated to be purer than the water you are drinking now!)
Oppose development sprawl, new highways and impermeable surfaces
Vote for development and funding of alternative, sustainable technologies
Support land conservation and Open Space (only 13% of Earth is protected land)
Tell your legislators what you're doing – and then you can ask more of them!
Demand legal and pricing controls for water usage so agriculture will turn to more effective irrigation and more drought-tolerant crops
Ask your elected officials to create a 5- or 10-year plan with goals to cut water and energy usage
Support mass transportation and request no salt is used to de-ice roadways
Vote for town plans with denser communities to be more energy efficient and share services

EDUCATION **No Education – No Water!** If one Kenyan Maasai could create an environment curriculum now in all Maasai elementary schools, we can be more proactive here in the US!

Learn the virtual water content of food and products we consume. For instance:
Beef needs 3x the amount of water as chicken – eat more chicken
Rice needs 40x the amount of water as potatoes – eat more potatoes
Beer has lower water footprint than wine!
1 sheet of paper consumes almost 3 gallons of water in production – print less
1 orange needs 13 gallons of water to get to the grocery shelf
1 slice of bread needs 11 gallons of water to get to the grocery shelf
1 cotton shirt needs 713 gallons of water to be grown and produced
Encourage children to start Watershed Protection Clubs