

Conserving Water at Home

By Jackie Jackson - MPC

Most of us take for granted an abundant supply of good, fresh water. We meet our daily needs when we turn on the faucet and get seemingly unlimited running water. However, this situation is changing as more and more communities face water shortages.

Water shortages are certainly inconvenient and even scary. At first, they are hard to understand we know that the United States daily rainfall equals 4.2 trillion gallons. However, water is not always located where it is needed and demand keeps increasing.

In the last 30 years the United States demand for water has grown faster than our ability to find new water sources. During this period while our population grew 52 percent, total water use tripled. Demand for water continues to rise sharply but population has increased only slightly in the last few years.

Water Use

Just how much water do we consume each day? Studies show wide variations in different areas of the country and between urban and rural households. According to the American Water Works Association, the average United States resident uses about 110 gallons a day. Statistics for our part of the country show that a typical consumer uses 50 to 75 gallons daily inside the home. We use most for toilets followed by bathing, laundry/dishes and cooking/drinking.

Water use varies with time of day and season of the year. Households use less water in the early morning, while most people are sleeping, and during the winter. Peak consumption is in the spring and summer and when the family gets home in the late afternoon. However, everybody's use is a little different. Home water use mirrors each person's lifestyle and behavior.

Conservation – It's Everyone's Responsibility

Water shortages are real, touching many United States communities each year. Because water conservation is a good defense against shortages, it should happen all the time, not just when shortages occur.

To begin conserving water, every one needs to know some simple facts:

1. Water is a limited resource.
2. Water costs a great deal in energy and money to pump, move and purify.
3. Water consumption can be reduced significantly in the average home through simple practices.

It isn't hard to conserve water, it doesn't change your lives drastically. It's mostly a matter of using good common sense. Think about water – and when you do – think about conserving it!