



Water Conservation

Info Sheet 05

People often wonder why they have to conserve water in Ireland. Don't we have lots of water, doesn't it rain all the time? The truth is that we do get a lot of rain in Ireland but would you go to your local river to get a drink of water? Or would you wash your clothes and dishes in the local river? Why do you think this is?

There are three main reasons:

- **Health.** You do not know if this water is safe to use.
- **Convenience.** It is much more convenient to turn on your tap for a drink of water or to take a shower.
- **Pollution.** Waste water from your actions may cause pollution, e.g. *detergent used when washing dishes.*

So the water that comes to your house/school has to be taken (abstracted) from the river and treated in a Water Treatment Plant. It has to be distributed through a network of 7,200 km of pipe to get to your house/school and the wastewater generated has to be treated before it can be released back into the environment.

This costs a lot of money. So by wasting water you are in fact wasting money too!

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Many people in the world today have to fetch all the water they need, and may only use up to 10 litres a day. We use nearly all that in one flush of the loo! Just think how different your life would be if you didn't have water on tap .

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See tips for conserving water inside. ➔



Here are some tips for conserving water at home and at school:

Kitchen:



Wait until you have a full load before setting the dishwasher off.

A dripping tap can waste over 4 litres of water per day.

Fix any leaking taps or water pipes, even a small drip can add up to a lot over time.

Use a bowl for washing vegetables/dishes
– you will use less water than filling the sink.

For a cold drink, instead of running the tap until the temperature is just right, why not fill a covered jug and put it in the fridge?



Bathroom



The average bath uses 80 litres of water. Why not take a shower instead. A five minute shower can use half the water of an average bath but be aware of power showers as they can use a third more water than the average bath.

Some larger toilet cisterns can continue to work effectively with a smaller flush. Place a toilet insert (for example a Hippo Bag) in the cistern. This will reduce the amount of water released each time you flush by about 3 litres.

Note: If more than one flush is required to clear the toilet remove the Hippo Bag because you will end up using more water.

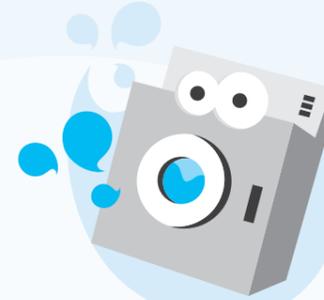
A running tap can use up to 6 litres of water a minute.

Don't leave the tap running when brushing your teeth.



Many urinals do not have controls so flushing continues for 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This means that much of the water used in flushing the urinals will occur when there is nobody in the building, which means large amounts of water is wasted. Flush control devices should be fitted in such situations.

Utility Room:



Washing machines can use up to 65 litres of water per load.

Wait until you have a full load of clothes before doing the washing, or use the half load button. You will save water, electricity and detergent.

When purchasing a new water using appliance check to see if it uses water efficiently.

Outdoors:

A sprinkler uses more water in one hour than a family of four uses in a day. Use a watering can instead of a sprinkler.

Water in the evening to reduce the amount of water that may evaporate.

Before watering your plants check the weather forecast – it may rain tomorrow!

Why not collect rainwater from your roof and down-pipes in a water butt or buckets and use it to water your plants?

Like garden sprinklers, hosepipes can use over 500 litres of water per hour – use a bucket and sponge to clean your car instead.



