



**Scottish  
Water**

Trusted to serve Scotland



**Water efficient living**

# Water efficiency

With Scotland's climate, you might think there is plenty of water to go around.

On a global scale:

- 70% of the world's surface is covered in water
- 97% of it is salty
- 3% is freshwater. Of this 3%,  $\frac{3}{4}$  is frozen, leaving less than 1% available for use by all the people, animals and plants on the planet.

Just because we have more than our fair share of rain, lochs and rivers in Scotland, doesn't mean that we shouldn't use our tap water wisely.

## Climate change

The climate is changing and it's vital that we all play our part in protecting our natural environment. As a business, we are committed to reducing our own energy consumption and carbon footprint through a range of initiatives such as reducing leakage to save water, sourcing supplies locally to reduce the impact of transporting materials to our sites and using energy saving devices such as motion sensitive lighting.

We also want to encourage you to look at your water use throughout your home and garden, and ask you to do at least one thing in your daily routine that will help save water and energy. Even if your savings are only small, every drop counts.

When you use water, you will also be using energy. We use energy to treat the water and, sometimes, energy to pump the water too. You use energy to heat the water and perhaps you also pump it (for example in a power shower, or pumping out the washing machine at the end of the cycle). There is also energy involved to pump and treat water once you've used it (waste water).

The more water you use, the more energy is needed.

You have to pay for the energy you use through your gas or electricity bills and of course you pay for the water as well. But there's not just a financial cost. The more energy you use, the more carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) is emitted into the atmosphere, contributing to climate change.

The government has set a target of reducing Scotland's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 80% of 1990 levels by 2050. Reducing the amount of water we all use can help decrease our energy use, and in turn help cut Scotland's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Plus, it can help you save on your gas and electricity bills.

Climate change, along with more people living in Scotland and increasing numbers of people using water-using household appliances as part of their daily routines, puts pressure on the water environment. We all need to start to look at using water wisely in order to reduce the strain on water supplies, which will help to ensure that every time we turn on the tap in future we all get a clear, fresh supply of drinking water.

## Water facts

- Each person in Scotland uses an average of 150 litres of water a day.
- With over 5 million Scottish Water customers (over 2.4 million households) we supply 1 billion litres of water a day.
- Toilet flushing accounts for around 30% of water used in the home and bathing and showering accounts for another third.
- Only around 4% of the water supplied to your home is actually used as drinking water!

## Water fiction

- It rains a lot in Scotland, but this does NOT mean that we have plenty of water. We don't get the most rain where we need the most water. It's not always possible to move it and it takes a lot of energy to do so.
- Putting bleach, cleaning liquids or lots of water down your drains, toilet or sinks does NOT help keep the sewers clean! In fact, cleaners containing phosphates need more chemicals to remove them from the waste water system.

## Tips to use water wisely

We want to encourage everyone to use water wisely – it doesn't need a major lifestyle change. It's not about the water we use, it's about the water we waste. See how many of these simple and effective tips can help you save water and protect the environment.

Make sure taps both inside your house and in your garden are not dripping, turn off or replace the washer.

A dripping tap wastes at least 5,500 litres of water a year – in a year that's enough to fill a paddling pool every week for the whole summer.



## In the kitchen

- Don't use a running tap to wash your hands, dishes or vegetables – put the plug in or use a basin instead.
- Use a jug or sports water bottle to chill your tap water in the fridge instead of running the tap.
- Defrost food in the fridge or the microwave, not under a running tap.
- Don't fill the kettle to the top when you only want a cup of tea – boiling just the water you need saves water and electricity/gas.
- Wait until you have enough dishes or clothes for a full load before you use your dishwasher or washing machine.

If you must do smaller washes use the half load cycle. If clothes or dishes aren't too dirty, use a quick wash setting.



## In the bathroom

- Don't leave the tap running while you brush your teeth. Only turn the tap on when you want to rinse, or use a glass of water for rinsing.
- If your toilet has a large or old cistern, fit it with a water-saving device – they save water every time you flush. Or you could consider a dual flush option.
- Bag It and Bin It. An unnecessary flush can use up to a cistern full of water. The only things you should ever flush down the toilet are human waste and toilet roll (not too much).
- Take a shower instead of a bath – it uses around a  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the water and saves time and money. You can try and use a shower timer to try and cut down the time and energy you spend in your shower. And watch out for power showers, they use as much water as a bath!



## Outside

The amount of water you use outside your home is dependant on the seasons, typically around 7% of the water used everyday is for activities like watering your garden or washing your car. When the weather is warmer this can increase the amount of the water you use in your garden.

There are lots of ways you can use water wisely outside your home and still have a healthy garden and a clean car:

- Use a watering can instead of a hose for your plants – it's more accurate, placing the water where it does most good. Plus if you water early in the morning or late in the evening less

of the water you use will evaporate and more will go to the plant roots.

- Plants prefer rainwater to tap water, so the more rainwater you can store in your garden the better. Use a water butt to collect rainfall for watering the garden.
- Use a bucket and sponge instead of a hosepipe to wash the car. If you must use a hosepipe fit it with a trigger nozzle so it only runs when you need it.
- Use a brush to clean paths, patios and driveways, not a hose.

## Water world-wide

Although you may think that we get our fair share of rain, we all need to do our bit to help to ensure that there is enough water for us now and for our families in the future to use.

Not everywhere in the world has the same supply and access to treated water for drinking and using in their daily lives. There are some countries that, like Scotland, have plenty of rain, but they don't have the actual equipment and networks of pipes to be able to bring clear, fresh water into the heart of peoples' homes. There are also some countries that get very little rainfall and this means that there is hardly enough water for people to use.



In developing countries where people don't have access to good treated water supplies, the average person uses around 20 litres of water a day, compared to Scotland where we use around 150 litres a day. So you hopefully find the hints and tips within this leaflet will help you use water more wisely in and around your home and garden.

To find more simple tips visit our website at

[www.scottishwater.co.uk/savewater](http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/savewater)

# Keeping up to date and getting in touch

We are always working so the cycle never stops – find out more about Scottish Water, our services and keep up to date with what we are doing in your area:

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0800 0778778

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To receive free texts (SMS)\* to keep up to date about our work or service updates, such as having no water supply, in your area – please text **'Update' with your postcode to 82228.**

Alternative formats of this leaflet can be made available free of charge. For information on Braille, large print, audio and a variety of languages, please call our Customer Helpline.

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