

Indoor Water Use in the United States

Americans use large quantities of water inside their homes. A family of four can use 400 gallons of water every day, and, on average, approximately 70 percent of that water is used indoors.

The bathroom is the largest consumer of indoor water. The toilet alone can use 27 percent of household water. Almost every activity or daily routine that happens in the home bathroom uses a large quantity of water. For example:

- Older toilets use between 3.5 and 7 gallons of water per flush. However, WaterSense® labeled toilets require 75 to 80 percent less water.
- A leaky toilet can waste about 200 gallons of water every day.
- A bathroom faucet generally runs at 2 gallons of water per minute. By turning off the tap while brushing your teeth or shaving, a person can save more than 200 gallons of water per month.

Outside the bathroom, there are many opportunities to save water. Here are some common water efficiency measures, along with a few solutions to those problems you may not have known existed:

- High-efficiency washing machines can conserve large amounts of water. Traditional models use between 27 and 54 gallons of water per load, but new, energy- and water-conserving models (front-loading or top-loading, non-agitator ones) use less than 27 gallons per load.

How Much Water Do We Use?



Source: American Water Works Association Research Foundation, "Residential End Uses of Water," 1999

- Washing the dishes with an open tap can use up to 20 gallons of water, but filling the sink or a bowl and closing the tap saves 10 of those gallons.
- Keeping a pitcher of water in the refrigerator saves time and water instead of running the tap until it gets cold.
- Not rinsing dishes prior to loading the dishwasher could save up to 10 gallons per load.

WaterSense, a partnership program sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, seeks to help families and businesses realize that they can reduce water use by 20 to 30 percent by doing just a few simple things, such as upgrading to higher quality, more efficient products. For more information, visit www.epa.gov/watersense.