

# WATER'S WORTH SAVING

Your super handy guide to  
saving water in the home

**NORTHUMBRIAN  
WATER** *living water*

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When it comes to our homes, many of us are literally pouring water – and therefore money – down the drain.

In the North East, we're each managing to get through a staggering 4,500 litres of water a month on average – which is bad for the environment and for our wallets. But the good news is together we can fix it.

## SO WHERE DO WE START?

We need to start at home. This information guide will help you understand how much water you're using and share tips to use less in the three main areas in the house, the kitchen, the bathroom and garden as well as elsewhere. We'll help you save energy too, and let you know about the big improvements we're making ourselves.

## LET'S GET STARTED...

# SO HOW MUCH WATER ARE YOU USING NOW?

One of the key things to help with understanding how much water you use each day and how much you can save comes from knowing your habits and behaviours. On average in this area, each person uses around 150 litres of water a day. Over a year, that's a whopping 54,750 litres.

This table shows the annual use in the average home. Where do you fit in? Your water bill will tell you the exact amount you're using if you are on a water meter. If you are not on a water meter, you can find out roughly how much you and your household are using on our online calculator. To understand how much water you're using each day, visit [nwl.co.uk/calculator](http://nwl.co.uk/calculator).

**SO COME ON. CHALLENGE YOUR HOUSEHOLD TO USE LESS!**

Litres used per household (1,100 litres = 1m³ = 220 gallons)					
Number of people in the household	<b>LOW</b> 	<b>AVERAGE</b> 	<b>HIGH</b> 	<b>VERY HIGH</b> 	
	Prefers showers Few/no baths No washing machine/ infrequent user Little/no garden watering	Mixture of bath/showers Prefers showers Regular use of washing machine, no dishwasher No hosepipe	Frequent bath/showers Regular use of washing machine Not using a washing up bowl when washing up Occasional hosepipe use	Frequent baths Heavy use of washing machine Not using a washing up bowl when washing up Extensive use of sprinkler/hosepipe Leaving the tap running while cleaning teeth and washing up	
	1	40,000	55,000	70,000	135,000
	2	70,000	90,000	115,000	180,000
	3	95,000	125,000	155,000	220,000
	4	115,000	150,000	185,000	250,000
	5	135,000	170,000	215,000	280,000

# WHERE DO WE USE IT MOST?

Usually, the bathroom is where we use the most water. So let's see what we can do to use less...



6%  
Outdoor Use



26%  
Toilet



7%  
Washing Machine



20%  
Bath



15%  
Kitchen Sink



8%  
Basins



17%  
Showers



1%  
Dishwashers

Our data shows that this is how a typical household in England uses water. Would you agree?



# WATER'S WORTH SAVING IN THE BATHROOM

Over half of the water used at home is in the bathroom. Whether it's washing, flushing or brushing, you might be surprised by how much we get through in an average day.

Here's how it breaks down...

## DON'T FLUSH IT AWAY!

OK, so 26% of an average household's water is literally flushed down the toilet; and toilets installed pre 2001 flush way more water than they need to. Yet there is a simple solution: the super smart Save-a-Flush. It's a bag full of crystals that goes into the cistern. The crystals then expand to displace the equivalent of 1 litre of water for each flush, saving a four person household up to 7,300 litres of water a year. Dual flush toilets are considered to be water efficient as the volume of water used to flush is much less, but watch out for those pesky leaks! For more information and to order your **FREE** Save-a-Flush at [nwl.watersavingkit.com](http://nwl.watersavingkit.com).

## LEAKY LOOS

Simply noticing a change in noise, a trickle at the back of your toilet, it is taking longer to fill up may indicate that you have a toilet which is leaking, the button sticking down or continually refilling.

A leaky toilet is often a trickle down into the toilet pan (while not being flushed) or continuously flowing. This could be wasting around 78,500 litres a year, equating to an average saving of £200 a year! That's the same amount as 52,300 kettles.

## DO YOU HAVE A LEAKY LOO?

We are currently offering free leaking toilet repairs. If your toilet has a leak contact the team via email at [watersaving@nwl.co.uk](mailto:watersaving@nwl.co.uk).



### HIDDEN

Can you hear dripping water inside the cistern?



### TRICKLING

Is water trickling from the cistern to the pan?



### FLOWING

Does your flush button stick in the down position?

## BE A MORE EFFICIENT WASHER

Baths use between 60-80 litres of water a time so were previously considered to be less water efficient than showers. However, with more of us now having power showers and taking longer, this isn't always the case.

So what's the answer?

Fitting an aerated showerhead will reduce the amount of water you use each time, using a five-minute shower timer will help to keep your showers shorter and don't forget, if you must let the shower warm up before you get in, collect the water in a bucket to reuse later. You wouldn't leave a light on five minutes before entering a room, so why do it with your shower? Bingo!

If a shower isn't an option for you, try reducing the amount of water you put into your bath. An inch is approximately 15 litres, each time. That's about 26 pint glasses!

Order your **FREE** shower timer at [nwl.watersavingkit.com](http://nwl.watersavingkit.com).

## STOPPING THAT DRIP

A dripping tap can waste as much as 26 litres of water a day. Check your taps for leaks and replace washers where necessary. Small drips add up to big savings.



Having a bath over a shower

=



uses between 60-80 litres of water each time!



# AND THE KITCHEN TOO

Well, after the bathroom the kitchen is usually the second room in the house where we use the most water.

From dishwashers to washing machines, there are lots of ways we use water.

So what can we do to help?

## OUT WITH THE OLD...

These days, there are some superb appliances on the market to help us use less water. A new washing machine uses about half the water and energy of the average 10 year old one. Similarly, many new dishwashers use as little as nine litres of water per cycle. So when you are next replacing your appliances, look out for the more efficient ones to save more money and if you have an ECO setting on your appliance use it – it might save on water as well as your energy.

## NO MORE HALF FULL WASHES!

We're all guilty of it from time to time, but half filling the dishwasher or washing machine wastes a huge amount of water. In fact, older washing machines use between 45-70 litres per cycle. So either fill it up or use the 'half full' feature. Easy!

## TIME TO RE-THINK THE SINK

Washing up isn't all we do at the kitchen sink. We might wash veggies, rinse our recycling, and more. For these tasks, a full flow of water just isn't necessary. So why not fill a bowl instead or fit a tap adaptor to get a bubbly flow and use less?

# TOP TIPS FOR SAVING WATER

## IN THE BATHROOM

- Turning off the tap while you brush your teeth saves up to six litres of water a time.
- Use a plug in the sink to wash rather than running the water.
- If you have a dual flush toilet, use the smaller flush when you can.
- Save water and avoid blockages by putting tissues, wipes and cotton wool in the bin not the loo.

## CLEVER GADGETS YOU CAN FIT

- Tap aerators.
- Aerated shower heads.
- Dual flush toilet retrofits.
- Shower timers.

Order your **FREE** water saving products at [nwl.watersavingkit.com](http://nwl.watersavingkit.com).

## IN THE KITCHEN

- Check for dripping taps at the kitchen basin and fix them with a washer where necessary. It can really save you money.
- Rather than running the tap to get cold water, keep a covered jug of it in the fridge.
- Only boil as much water as you need in the kettle each time. This saves water and energy too.

## CLEVER GADGETS YOU CAN FIT

- Water and energy efficient appliances.
- Tap inserts and adaptors.





# HANDY HABITS FOR WATERING THE GARDEN

It's not just inside the house where we need to save more water but outside, too.

So here are some simple habits we can adopt grow a flourishing garden without wasting our wonderful water.

## NIFTY TIPS FOR PERFECT PLANTS

- Choose drought-resistant plants with a natural tolerance to dry soil (the labels will help guide you or you can just ask for advice at your local garden centre).
- Always water in the evening so your plants can retain more moisture.
- Just water the base of the plants and soil as this is where they like to drink it.
- Avoid over-watering your poor plants. As well as wasting water, it's the most common way to kill them.

- Plant your borders densely. It provides better ground cover for them and keeps the water contained.
- Where possible, use the mighty mulch. It's great at controlling weeds and keeps the soil cool to prevent evaporation. Voilà! For more information check out our garden guide.

## SAVE SOME WATER ON YOUR HANGING BASKETS

- Use water storing crystals and gel mats which you can buy at the garden centre. The water storage means you have to water your plants less, saving water, time and money.
- Use a fine textured compost as it holds more water than the denser ones.
- Sandwich a layer of polythene between the moss and liner of the basket to stop the water draining straight through.



Over watering  
your plants...

=

is the most common  
way to kill them!

## GETTING A GREEN LAWN THE GREENER WAY

- Firstly, how much grass does a person need? A smaller lawn with flower beds and features will save mowing and you could water less. It'll take less time and effort, and is more eco-friendly. Ta-da!
- Avoid over-watering your lawn. It encourages the grass roots to grow closer to the surface so it's more likely to dry out.
- It's still ok to mow regularly in hot weather. Just set the mower to cut a little higher and leave the clippings on the lawn to help protect it. Simple.

## LET'S CATCH THE RAIN AND RE-USE IT!

One of the most efficient ways to save water in the garden is to use a water butt or two. They will help collect some of the 90,000 litres of rain that falls on each UK rooftop each year. You can then use this water to feed your plants or wash your car. Now that's clever.

## BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

We work with trusted suppliers to provide water saving products to our customers. Water butts are available through our website via our third party suppliers. Order yours online from [nwl.co.uk/savewater](http://nwl.co.uk/savewater).



Using a hosepipe  
for an hour...

=

is the same as using  
100 watering cans!

# SOME BRIGHT IDEAS TO SAVE ENERGY TOO

Treating and heating water uses a lot of energy, and pumping it into our homes does too. So the more water we heat, the more gas, electricity or oil we use – which in turn makes more carbon emissions and costs us money.

Did you know that 25% of your energy bill is heating water in your home? If we use less water, we save energy too. Around 6% of UK carbon emissions arise from how we use water. A massive 89% of this comes from heating water in our homes which makes up around 20-25% of a typical household gas bill.

So what steps can we take to use less?  
Let's take a look...

## **KEEP YOUR SHOWERS SHORT**

Around a quarter of our energy bills are spent heating water and a lot of this is used taking showers. So the moral of the story is: the less time you spend in there, the less energy you'll use and the less it will cost. You could also fit an aerated showerhead\*. These draw air into the flow which reduces the volume of water used while maintaining that soaking feeling!

## **AND THAT'S A FACT**

If you shower daily, spending just one minute less in there would mean saving the equivalent of 40 glasses of water per shower and around 60.5kg of CO<sub>2</sub> in one year. Incredible!

\*Aerated showerheads are not suitable for electric, power or pumped showers but are suitable for most other kinds, providing they have a flow rate greater than eight litres a minute. Before fitting one, make sure you check it will not invalidate the shower manufacturer's warranty.



# SAVING WATER CAN REDUCE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

The energy needed to power appliances and to heat up our water has an invisible carbon footprint and the way we use water in the home can have a big impact on climate change.

The good news is that making a few small changes to the way we use water in the home could help to make a big difference for future generations.

## HERE ARE A FEW OF OUR TOP ENERGY SAVING TIPS:

- Using a washing up bowl rather than leaving the tap running could save 666kg of CO<sub>2</sub> each year. This is roughly the same as a return trip between London and Oslo.
- Replacing your daily bath with a three minute shower could save 849kg CO<sub>2</sub> each year for a family of four.

- Hanging your clothes on a washing line rather than using a tumble-dryer or putting the heating on can also make a big dent in carbon emissions – and remember, it doesn't have to be sunny for your clothes to dry! And if it does rain, bring your clothes inside and use an airer to help them dry.

With growing challenges caused by climate change and the toll our ever increasing population is taking on our lovely planet, it's super important that we're all doing what we can to use less.

Northumbrian Water is committed to being carbon neutral by 2027. To find out more about how we plan to do this visit [nwg.co.uk/netzero](http://nwg.co.uk/netzero).

# HERE'S HOW WE'RE DOING OUR BIT

With growing challenges caused by climate change and the toll our ever increasing population is taking on our lovely planet, it's super important that we're all doing what we can to use less.

At Northumbrian Water, we're proud to be the number one water company putting water efficient initiatives into practice in the UK and we'll keep working hard to make positive changes.

Here's what we're doing to help...

## OFFERING FREE INSTALLATION OF WATER METERS

Water meters are becoming increasingly common in the UK. They're a fairer way to charge for water because you only ever pay for what you use. For this reason, meters are better for the environment too because people tend to use less. That's why in most cases, Northumbrian Water offer free meter installation.

If you'd like one fitted or want to find out more, visit [nwl.co.uk/watermeter](https://nwl.co.uk/watermeter).

## IMPROVING HOW WE DEAL WITH LEAKS

We are continuously improving the way we detect and deal with leaks; increasing efficiency and reducing repair time. We fix large mains leaks. Yet a significant proportion of leaks happen in private properties. So if you suspect there's a problem with the supply pipe to your home, we'll investigate it.

For information or to report a leak, visit [nwlcommunityportal.co.uk/leaks](https://nwlcommunityportal.co.uk/leaks).

## HELPING CUSTOMERS KNOW WHO'S RESPONSIBLE FOR PIPES

The pipe that connects the water main in the street to the stop-valve outside your house belongs to Northumbrian Water, this is our responsibility. However, the pipe-work leading from the stop-valve into your home, is the home owner's responsibility. So legally, either you (or your landlord) will need to pay to have it fixed. We'll keep letting customers know this to help you plan ahead.

For more information on pipe responsibility visit [nwl.co.uk/services/leaks/fixing-leaks](https://nwl.co.uk/services/leaks/fixing-leaks).



# SHARING OUR KNOWLEDGE

At Northumbrian Water, we have years of experience helping our customers and our communities to manage their water use more effectively.

## WORKING WITH BUSINESSES IN OUR COMMUNITIES

We work together with business in our communities to identify potential areas of waste and then help put solutions in place to prevent water wastage, save water and money. For water saving tips for businesses, visit [nwl.co.uk](http://nwl.co.uk) or WRAP [wrap.org.uk](http://wrap.org.uk) as they specialise in this area, too.

## THE RIPPLE EFFECT

We are proud to have developed our exciting and varied education programme, The Ripple Effect, that promotes the benefits of water saving to young people and teachers alike. The Ripple Effect features activities, posters and worksheets, along with helpful videos, hints and tips. To find out more visit [nwg.co.uk/ripple](http://nwg.co.uk/ripple).

## ORDER YOUR FREE WATER EFFICIENT PRODUCTS

Water saving kit:  
[nwl.watersavingkit.com](http://nwl.watersavingkit.com)

## NEED SOME SPECIFIC INFORMATION?

Water saving pages:  
[nwl.co.uk/savewater](http://nwl.co.uk/savewater)

Waterwise (for information on water saving products and appliances):  
[waterwise.org.uk](http://waterwise.org.uk)

Environment Agency:  
[environment-agency.gov.uk](http://environment-agency.gov.uk)

Consumer Council for Water:  
[ccwater.org.uk](http://ccwater.org.uk)

WRAP (water saving for businesses):  
[wrap.org.uk](http://wrap.org.uk)

Waterwise:  
[waterwise.org.uk](http://waterwise.org.uk)

Water's Worth Saving:  
[watersworthsaving.org.uk](http://watersworthsaving.org.uk)

We'd love to hear your own water savings tips along with any feedback you have on this booklet by emailing [savingwater@nwl.co.uk](mailto:savingwater@nwl.co.uk).

# WE'RE HAPPY TO HELP

## FOR GENERAL ENQUIRIES

For all general and non-billing queries:

[nwl.co.uk](http://nwl.co.uk)

0345 782 0999

## FOR QUERIES ABOUT WATER SAVING

or to share your top tips

[savingwater@nwl.co.uk](mailto:savingwater@nwl.co.uk)

## FOR INFORMATION ON WATER METERS OR HOW TO APPLY

[nwl.co.uk/watermeter](http://nwl.co.uk/watermeter)

## FOR BILLING ENQUIRIES

For all billing queries, contact our Customer

Centre: **0345 782 0111** (Monday to Friday, 8am  
until 8pm and Saturdays from 8am until 1pm.)

## FOR HELP WITH LEAKS OR TO REPORT A LEAK (AT HOME OR IN THE STREET)

[nwlcommunityportal.co.uk/leaks](http://nwlcommunityportal.co.uk/leaks)

## FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

[nwl.co.uk/priority](http://nwl.co.uk/priority)

To find out more about saving  
water in your home, visit  
**nwl.co.uk/savewater**  
or scan the QR code below.



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