

# FACT SHEET



F6

(Issued 30/10/2009)

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## THE REAL VALUE OF WATER



**Water is valuable in many ways -  
some of them surprising.  
Whatever its role, water plays an  
important part in all  
our lives.**

### DID YOU KNOW?

Here are some surprising facts about water:

- About 80% of the world is covered by water or ice.
- Only 1% of the world's water is suitable for human needs (97% is salt water in the ocean and 2% is ice).
- Australia is the world's driest continent. Of all the inhabited continents, Australia has the lowest rainfall and the lowest water run off.
- The human brain is 75% water.
- A man's body is 60-65% water (measured as a percentage of body weight) and a woman's is 50-60% water. Men tend to have more muscle, and muscle tissue contains a large amount of water.
- The human body loses 3-3.5 litres of water in an average day. This may be increased by exercise and climatic conditions.
- Less than 1% of the treated drinking water produced by water authorities is actually consumed by people. Most is used for lawns, showers, toilets, laundry, etc.

- An average person can survive for nearly two months without food, but less than a week without drinking water.
- Your washing machine and dishwasher cost you \$1 per load including water, energy, detergent and machine wear costs.
- The average household spends \$300 a year on baths and showers including water and heating costs.

### THE VALUE OF WATER

Water's availability has dictated the location and survival of civilisations through the ages. It is impossible to maintain public health and provide food without water.

Water is also essential for the community's quality of life. Relaxing in a quiet garden or park would not be possible without a reliable water supply.

People all over the world flock to dams, lakes and rivers for recreation. This demonstrates water's intangible social value.

The tangible economic value of water is demonstrated by industry's need for water. Economic stability for all sectors of industry depends on access to reliable, good quality water. A nation's economy is seriously affected by water shortages through drought or mismanagement. Our water resources must therefore be managed appropriately to maximise the social and economic potential of the land, both for the public interest and the economic future of the nation.

The provision of reticulated water supply and sewerage services in Australia has halved the death rate and reduced the rates of infectious disease by a factor of ten. Even now, there are significantly higher rates of infectious illness in Australian communities which do not have reticulated services.

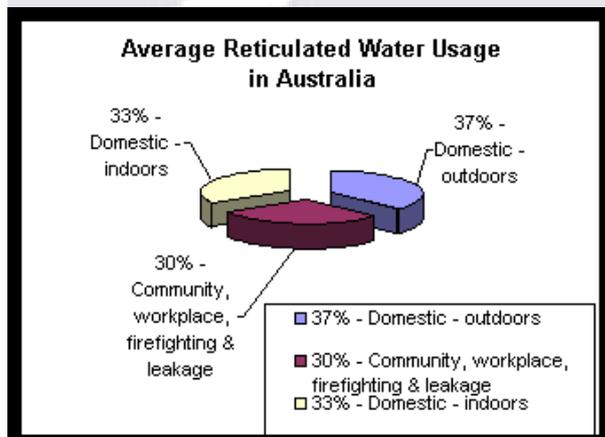


We have invested over \$50 billion to provide reticulated water supply and sewerage services throughout Australia. If we were to replace our current water supply and sewerage assets: dams, water and sewer mains, pumping stations and treatment works etc., it would cost \$12,000 per household

## AVERAGE WATER USE

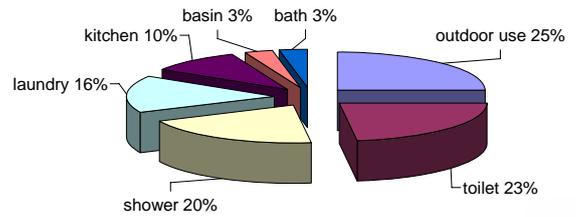
Water consumption levels vary throughout Australia. Average daily water use ranges from as little as 100 litres per person in some coastal areas to more than 800 litres per person in the dry inland areas. The current average daily water consumption is 340 litres per person, or 900 litres per household. In addition, an average of 150 litres of water per person is used every day in the workplace by industry and commerce, community uses such as watering of public parks and gardens, firefighting and system leakage.

Domestic water use comprises indoor and outdoor usage. The following graph shows the areas of average reticulated water usage in Australia.



The areas of average domestic usage are shown in the following graph.

## HOW MUCH WATER DO WE USE??



How much water is used, on average, in general household activities?

Toilet flush (single flush cistern)	12 litres
Bath	100 litres
Shower (10 minutes)	200 litres
Dishwasher load	50 litres
Washing machine load	150 litres
Brushing teeth with tap running	5 litres
Drinking, cooking, cleaning per Person per day	10 litres
Hand basin per use	5 litres
Garden sprinkler per hour	1000 litres
Garden dripper per hour	4 litres
Car washing with hose	200 litres
Hosing driveway	100 litres

*Total daily consumption per household* **900 litres**

## WHY BE WATERWISE ?

By using water wisely you can reduce water usage without compromising your lifestyle. You will:

- and supply systems
- keep your water bills down
- make large savings on your energy bills for water heating
- reduce the risk of water restrictions
- reduce your impact on the environment.

**Be WaterWise....it's Worth it !**

