Save Water and Energy by Showering Better

EPA WaterSense

Your TV and video game system aren't the only things that need energy to keep going. It takes energy to bring water to your home and school. Energy is also needed to heat that water when used for showering and hand washing. But did you know that if you use less water for cleaning and playing, you'll save energy and protect the environment?

Drops Need Watts

Water and energy work together. Have you ever picked up a gallon of water or milk from the fridge? It's pretty heavy, right? A lot of energy is used to carry every gallon of water you use from a drinking water source to a treatment plant that makes it safe to drink. After water leaves the treatment plant, more energy is needed to carry it through water pipes to your house. Imagine the journey it has taken—and just how tired you would be after carrying that much water all day!

And the work doesn't stop there. If you want that water to be hot, it takes energy to warm it up before it hits the tap. Here's some food for thought—the energy it takes to treat and deliver the water that just 10 houses use in a year could power your home's refrigerator for six years!

Did You Know?

Water is also used to cool the power plants that generate the electricity we use every day. So every time your television, computer, or lights use energy, water is being used up too. In fact, it takes 3,000 to 6,000 gallons of water to power one light bulb left on 12 hours a day for a year. Turn out the lights and save both water *and* energy!

That's why it's so important not to waste water at home or school. Don't leave the water on when you brush your teeth. Make sure to turn off the faucet all the way after you wash your hands. If water drips from the faucet after you turn it off, it could be a leak. Tell an adult so it can be fixed. One of the best places to save both water and energy at home is in your shower. Besides taking shorter showers, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's WaterSense® program has some tips for how you and your family can "shower better."

Showering Facts

The shower is a place where we can clean up, cool off, wake up, or relax after a long day. But it's also a place where we waste a lot of water and energy! Consider this:

- The average shower lasts about eight minutes. Since the average showerhead has a water flow of 2.1 gallons per minute, each shower uses more than 16 gallons of water!
- Across the United States, we use more than one trillion gallons of water each year just for showering.

Never fear! You and your family can still save water and energy. WaterSense has a special label for showerheads that use less water but still provide a great spray of water when you shower. If your family uses a WaterSense labeled showerhead:

- Every shower, you'll save enough electricity to power a 60-watt light bulb for nearly 7 hours.
- Every year, you'll save the amount of water it takes to wash more than 88 loads of laundry. That's a lot of dirty soccer jerseys!

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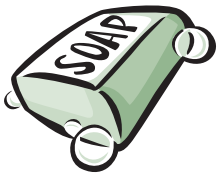
Every Drop Counts!



See what can happen when you cut your shower time by just one minute (or more if you're feeling ambitious) by filling in the blanks below. If you don't know how much time you spend in the shower, just use the average person's time of eight minutes.

1. **How long do you spend in each shower?** =_____ **minutes**
2. **Multiply that by the average shower flow:** **x 2.1 gallons a minute =** _____
3. **Multiply your answer for #2 by the number of times you shower every week:** =_____ **gallons per week**
4. **Multiply your answer for #3 by 52 weeks** =_____ **gallons per year**
5. **Subtract one minute from your regular shower time.** =_____ **minutes**
6. **Multiply that by the average shower flow:** **x 2.1 gallons a minute =** _____
7. **Multiply your answer for #6 by the number of times you shower every week:** =_____ **gallons per week**
8. **Multiply your answer for #7 by 52 weeks** =_____ **gallons per year**
9. **Subtract your answer for #4 from your answer for #8** =_____ **gallons saved per year!**

Bonus: How much water does your showerhead use per minute? Next time you take a shower, stand with a big bowl directly under the spray for six seconds. Multiply that number by 10. If it's more than two gallons, your family could save water with a WaterSense labeled showerhead!

Use Your WaterSense

Below are 13 hidden vertical, horizontal, and backwards words related to saving water and energy. How many words can you find?

A	L	P	L	U	G	V	J	S	X	S	Q	Q	T	G
G	A	C	F	K	E	Y	P	X	Q	G	G	A	M	Y
B	B	J	Q	R	N	T	Q	B	F	N	B	E	J	E
I	E	Y	E	K	V	U	X	E	T	I	E	S	K	I
I	L	G	H	E	I	W	K	D	E	V	L	N	E	H
Y	P	R	A	C	R	A	W	C	T	A	E	E	J	D
X	E	E	V	R	O	T	P	F	R	S	C	S	G	G
Q	X	N	E	U	N	T	N	G	W	A	T	R	A	A
J	D	E	R	O	M	S	C	J	O	S	R	E	U	L
O	N	M	A	S	E	H	J	C	L	M	I	T	Z	L
G	P	V	G	E	N	D	O	L	F	J	C	A	Y	O
O	M	I	E	R	T	E	P	R	F	F	I	W	U	N
U	D	A	E	H	R	E	W	O	H	S	T	U	S	E
H	G	G	Z	Q	P	Y	X	Z	S	A	Y	H	M	U
D	R	O	P	S	M	W	J	P	B	Y	Y	T	H	I

AVERAGE
DROPS
ELECTRICITY
ENERGY
ENVIRONMENT
FLOW
GALLON
LABEL
RESOURCE
SAVINGS
SHOWERHEAD
WATERSENSE
WATTS

- There are more than 300 million people in the United States. If each person reduced his or her shower time by one minute, we could save a combined 170 billion gallons each year!

look for WaterSense Meets EPA Criteria

- Energy we use at home is measured in something called kilowatt-hours, or kWh. On average, your home's television uses 18.5 kWh of electricity per month. If your family uses WaterSense labeled showerheads, you save more than 330 kWh of electricity per year. With the energy you're saving, you could you watch 18 months of television!

For more information, visit the WaterSense Kids' website at www.epa.gov/watersense/kids.