



metrowater  
water for life

# Using water wisely

Simple tips to save water, money, and even the planet

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# Use water wisely

Auckland may not be the wettest place in New Zealand, but it sometimes feels like it! So it may sound strange to hear that using water wisely is one of the most important things we can do.

Delivering water to your home uses a significant amount of energy and chemicals, adding to global warming and increasing your carbon footprint.

Yet about a third of the water that we use each day is wasted – it runs straight down the plughole or down the toilet without being used. We wouldn't throw out a third of the food we bought each week, yet that's exactly what most of us do with water.

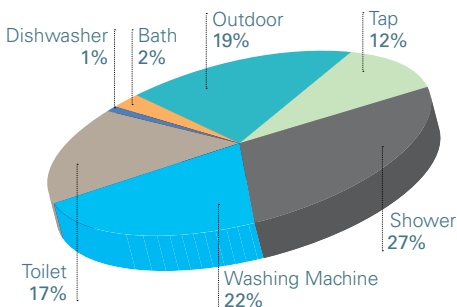
With very little effort, you can cut down that wastage, save money and reduce pressure on the environment. All it takes is a few small – and easy – changes to the way you use water.

How easy? Well, we've listed a whole bunch of ways further on in this brochure, all based on a simple philosophy:

“Be generous with the water you drink,  
be wise with the water you use.”

## Where water goes in your home

You'd be surprised how little of the water we use is for drinking or cooking.



**Note:** These figures are for a typical Auckland household. If you have a swimming pool or a large garden, or if you prefer baths to showers, the figures for your household may be different.

## How to track down a sneaky water leak

One of the most common causes of wastage is leaking taps, toilets and showerheads. Just one leaking tap can add up to 24,000 litres of wasted water every year. And that can add quite a bit to your water bill.

Want to know a quick and easy way to see if you've got any leaks? Turn off all your taps and any water-using appliances like the washing machine, and then check your water meter. Wait 15 minutes and if the numbers on the meter have changed, you have a leak.

## Easy ways to use water wisely

The great thing about using water wisely is that it's painless. You don't have to give up anything you enjoy – just do a few things differently and watch that water bill shrink!

### The inside word: 10 tips for indoors

#### 1 Sing shorter songs in the shower

Every minute that you don't spend in the shower saves you seven litres of water. Reduce your shower by one minute, and you'll save about 2,500 litres of water a year.

#### 2 Install a water-saving showerhead

If you are on mains pressure, consider installing a water efficient showerhead, which restricts the flow to less than 10 litres per minute and saves on water and power.

### **3 Check for leaks in your toilet**

Toilets can leak water unnoticed, the sneaky things. And that could cost you more than 16,000 litres in a year.

**Super smart tip:** A great trick for finding a leak is to add a bit of food dye to the cistern and wait 15 minutes. If colour appears in the bowl, you have a leak, and it's time to call the plumber or do a bit of DIY.

### **4 Install a dual flush toilet**

A full toilet flush sends 12 litres of water down the drain. A dual flush toilet can use as little as 3 litres in a flush. Not bad! If you have a single flush toilet, you could install a water saving device, but do check the manufacturer's instructions to make sure it's suitable for your toilet.

### **5 Turn off the tap when brushing or shaving**

A running tap wastes 10 litres per minute. Turn it off when brushing your teeth. And guys, fill the bottom of the basin with hot water to rinse your razor while shaving, then run the water at the end to wash your face.

### **6 No half measures in the kitchen or laundry**

A full load of dishes or laundry uses less water and power than two half loads.

### **7 Washing vegetables**

Plug that sink when you're preparing vegetables. It'll save you up to 10 litres per minute.

### **8 Shop with the stars**

If you're replacing an old washing machine or toilet, choose models with a water efficiency rating of 4 stars or more. They'll save you a lot of money in the long run.

### **9 A quick scrape will do**

With modern dishwashers and detergent tablets, there's no need to pre-rinse your dishes. You can just scrape off the leftovers and pop the dishes in the machine. Give your machine a test run – you might be surprised at the results!

### **10 Use tap aerators**

Tap aerators not only look cool, they also reduce water flow by up to 50% – with no loss of water pressure. And they aren't very expensive.

## Out and about: 10 ways to save water outdoors

Typical households use up to three times more water in summer than in winter, just from watering lawns. Here are some easy ways to save water outdoors.

### 1 **It's a lawn, not a lake**

Even at the height of summer, a weekly drink is all your lawn needs. Water too frequently, and you can encourage grass roots to seek the surface, where they'll dry out more quickly.

**Super smart tip:** If the grass springs back when you walk on it, there's no need to water.

### 2 **Time your watering**

Early morning and late evening are the best times to water, as you'll lose less water to evaporation. What's more, watering in the hot sun can focus the sun's rays on tender leaves and burn them.

### 3 **Aim carefully**

By using watering cans or trigger nozzles on hoses, you can direct the water to precisely where it's needed.

**Super smart tip:** If you're planting a new garden, group plants with similar watering needs together so that you can water them easily in one go.

### 4 **Mulch your plants**

10cm of mulch can reduce water evaporation by up to 75%. That means less time spent watering and fewer weeds as well – and a lower water bill.

### 5 **Death to weeds**

Weeds gobble up water that your plants could use. Rip the pesky things out quick.

### 6 **Crystallise your pot plants**

Water crystals added to your pot plants can seriously reduce the need to water.

### 7 **Check for leaks**

Regularly check your outdoor taps for leaks. Just one leaking tap can waste 2,000 litres a month.

## **8 Install a rain barrel**

Rainwater is rich in natural minerals, and plants love it. A rain barrel is a great way to cheer up your plants and keep your water bill down.

**Phenomenal fact:** Nearly 200,000 litres of rainwater can be collected each year from a typical 150m<sup>2</sup> roof. That's about 500 litres a day – easily enough to water your lawn and garden.

## **9 Broom, broom**

Using a broom or rake to clear driveways and paths not only saves water, it's good exercise too.

## **10 Wash your lawn**

Did you know that car shampoos are full of the same phosphates found in many fertilisers? So next time you wash the car, why not park it on the lawn and get the bucket and sponge out? Hey presto! clean car, well fed lawn.

For more information on using water wisely, visit [www.metrowater.co.nz](http://www.metrowater.co.nz)