

SAMHS INFO BULLETIN



Compiled by Corporate Communication

NATIONAL WATER WEEK 5 -9 MARCH 2012

National Water Week is an annual awareness campaign of the Department of Water Affairs, which seeks to focus attention on water as a scarce and precious commodity in our country.

The campaign emphasises water conservation as one of the major interventions that South Africans need to appreciate if we are to guarantee water security and availability for the country. It also highlights the centrality of water as a resource in the well being of both the environment and people.

Celebrated under this year's theme: "Water is life; Respect it, Conserve it, Enjoy it", National water week aims:

- Raise awareness around the need to conserve and protect water resources.
- Highlight the Departments plans and achievements as custodian of the country's water resources.
- Ensure water is put firmly on the national agenda.
- Encourage everyone to use water sparingly at all times.
- Call upon all citizens to ensure each person uses water wisely and sparingly at all times.
- Remind citizens that South Africa is a water scarce country and that water is a finite resource.

WATER SAVING TIPS

In and around the house / business

- Turn the tap off between washing your face, brushing your teeth or shaving.
- Taking a five-minute shower a day, instead of a bath, will use a third of the water used bathing in a bath tub, saving up to 400 litres a week.
- Showering can use up to 20 litres of water per minute.
- If you prefer to bath, don't fill up the bath tub.
- Taking a bath can use between 80 and 150 litres of water per bath.
- Use low-flow showerheads, dual-flush toilet mechanisms and water-efficient washing machines.
- Kettles should not be filled to the brim but with just enough water for your needs. This will reduce your electricity bill too.
- Don't over-fill containers like cooking pots, as this may result in using more energy to heat the water.
- Reducing the toilet flush volume alone can save 20% of total water consumption. This can be done by putting a 2-litre cold drink bottle, filled with water and a little sand to add weight, into the cistern.
- Fix a leaking toilet otherwise it can waste up to 100 000 litres of water in one year.
- Avoid flushing the toilet unnecessarily. Dispose of tissues, insects and other waste in the trash rather than the toilet. Every time you flush the toilet, 12 litres of water is used.
- Use "grey water" - used water from baths, washing machines and other safe sources - to flush your toilet.
- Do not over-fill or excessively backwash your swimming pool.
- Use a bucket rather than a hosepipe to wash your car. If you have to use a hosepipe, use a sprayer that can be turned off in-between spraying the car. Using a garden hosepipe could use as much as 30 litres of water per minute.

- Do not pour paint and chemicals down the drain.
- Farmers must ensure that they keep toxic insecticides away from water sources and streams.
- Factories should take care of how they discharge mercury and other heavy metals into waste water.
- People living in rural areas should be careful not to use the river or river bank as a toilet.

In the garden

- Always water your plants during the early morning hours or in the evening, when temperatures are cool. Between 10:00 and 15:00 one can lose up to 90% of water on evaporation.
- Focus on indigenous and non-water consumptive alien plants (but not invasive alien plants).
- Group plants according to their water needs and to mulch around them.
- Water gardens less frequently, but water well. Using a garden hose could use as much as 30 litres of water per minute.
- Remove invasive alien plants on your property.
- Roof water can also be profitably stored in tanks, for watering gardens.
- Use "grey water" - used water from baths, washing machines and other safe sources - to water your garden