

# How to Conserve Water in the Home

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Water is the source of all life on earth, but are we doing enough to save it? At a time when access to drinking water is at an all-time low, there's never been a better time to put water saving strategies in place in your home.

Doing the laundry is a necessity, and with water and energy efficient laundry appliances, you can rest assured that you're helping to reduce your environmental impact

While water is a freely available resource, it is a scarce one - often compromised by low rainfall, heat waves that result in high evaporation rates, pollution and the destruction of river catchments.

[South Africans](#) have been lucky enough to pay relatively little for tap water - standard prices range from R4 to R16 for 1 000 litres. But during a water crisis, like the one many parts of the country are experiencing at present, households can expect to pay fines of around R6 000 if they exceed the current water restriction quotas.

The idea behind these penalties is to encourage responsible usage of water - that means no filling up of swimming pools, no more long showers and no washing down of driveways and pavements with a hosepipe. By refraining from these and other wasteful activities, you'll help ensure that there is enough water in the dams for everyone.

It's scary to think that many people don't have enough water to meet their basic needs. And it's having a ripple effect – crops are also feeling the impact of the water shortages, meaning the price of food could go up substantially too.

Jasmin Kraneveldt from [Bathroom Bizarre](#), Liam Gawne from [Miele](#) and Craig Taylor [Bathroom Butlers](#) share clever ways to help reduce your water consumption in the bathroom, laundry and kitchen. Get tips...

A normal running tap can use as much as 20 litres of water per minute, whereas a modern dishwasher can use between 10 litres and 20 liters of water per load.

## 1. Under pressure

Many people are happy to make considerable changes to reduce their water consumption, except when it comes to their bath or shower time.

Jasmin says bathing is a therapeutic experience, especially because many homeowners are living busy lives. A long, hot shower is a great way to wash away the day's woes, she says. But, this experience needn't be completely compromised during water-stressed times, she says.

Jasmin suggests replacing your existing showerhead with a water efficient model to significantly reduce the amount of water you use when you shower. She says there's a wide selection of shower heads on the market that save water - lots of it. Not only that, she says they're also relatively inexpensive and easy to install.

The same can be said for taps - water efficient tap aerators can be bought separately and manually inserted onto your existing tap, making them an affordable alternative to buying and installing a whole new water efficient faucet in your bathroom.

Jasmin says homeowners can get a variety of aerators that restrict the tap water flow to as little as three liters per minute - reducing your water consumption by as much as 50% and helping you save money every time you open the tap to wash your hands.

To save water in the garden, turn off your sprinkler's automatic timer.

## **2. Spin doctor**

According to Liam, choosing a washing machine with a good water efficiency rating is a sure way to reduce your impact in our water-stressed times.

He says rapid advances in technology have allowed appliance manufacturers to create products that meet the highest standards when it comes to efficiency.

"Doing the laundry is a necessity, and with water and energy efficient laundry appliances, you can rest assured that you're helping to reduce your environmental impact."

## **3. Coming clean**

According to Liam, dishwashers are commonplace in the modern home, and while they're a large investment, they can help save you money.

He says today's high-end dishwashers are energy and water efficient, often outperforming the old-fashioned hand washing methods when it comes to the amount of water they use.

He says a normal running tap can use as much as 20 litres of water per minute, whereas a modern dishwasher can use between 10 litres and 20 liters of water per load – a substantial difference.

Saving water is important. Get a pool cover to reduce evaporation.

Liam recommends packing your dishwasher according to the instructions in order to maximise its capacity, and only running the dishwasher when the load is full.

#### **4. Leave high and dry**

Heated towel rails have long been considered a luxury product for the high-end market, but they are in fact an item that all homes should have, especially when natural resources are scarce.

According to Craig, heated towel rails serve the practical purpose of drying your towels quickly and efficiently. As a result, it hinders the growth of bacteria so you don't have to wash your towels as often.

When compared with the carbon footprint created by frequently washing of towels, or by drying them with a tumble dryer, a heated towel rail comes out tops, he says.

#### **Simple water saving tips to try at home**

- Reduce showering time and switch off the taps when applying soap to your body or hair.
- Repair dripping taps and water leaks.
- Reduce the amount of laundry you have by reusing items and putting them in the machine only when there's a full load.
- Sweep paved areas instead of washing away dirt with a hosepipe.
- Avoid flushing the toilet unnecessarily. Install a dual-flush mechanism with separate buttons for liquid and solid waste. This will help save you an average of three liters of water per flush.
- As an alternative, fill your traditional toilet cistern with bricks or 2 litre cool drink bottles so that you use less water every time you flush.
- Turn of your sprinkler's automatic timer.
- Get a pool cover to reduce evaporation.
- Plant water-wise plants, and mulch your garden to keep the soil moist for longer.
- Wash your car using a bucket of water rather than with a hosepipe.
- Refrain from watering your garden or filling up the pool between 6am and 6pm.
- Replace water-wasting fixtures with low-flow aerators.
- Report burst pipes immediately.

Craig says it's vital to acknowledge that we all play a role in water conservation. Reducing your water usage will not only save you money, but will also help save the environment, he says.