Why your water consumption matters[1]

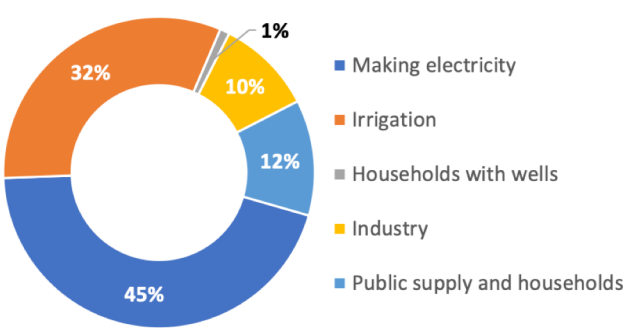
- We need freshwater to survive, but only 3% of the world's water is freshwater. Almost 2% of that is frozen in ice at the North and South poles. That leaves only about 1% for us to use.
- Many countries on Earth experience high water stress, which means that they use more than 80% of their available freshwater every year for industrial, agricultural, and domestic purposes. This makes them vulnerable to water shortage[2].
- Wasting water in one place limits the availability of it for others, including animals and plants that also need water to survive.
- Water takes a lot of energy, time, and money to clean and filter so that it is drinkable. Wasting water therefore means wasting energy, time, and money. Most of this energy comes from non-renewable fossil fuels, which results in carbon dioxide (greenhouse gas) emissions that contribute to climate change.
- Using too much water is unsustainable. If we take freshwater out of the ground faster than it can be replenished, eventually we will run out of it.

[1] https://www.huffpost.com/entry/why-wasting-water-is-even_b_11114690

[2] https://www.wri.org/blog/2013/12/world-s-36-most-water-stressed-countries

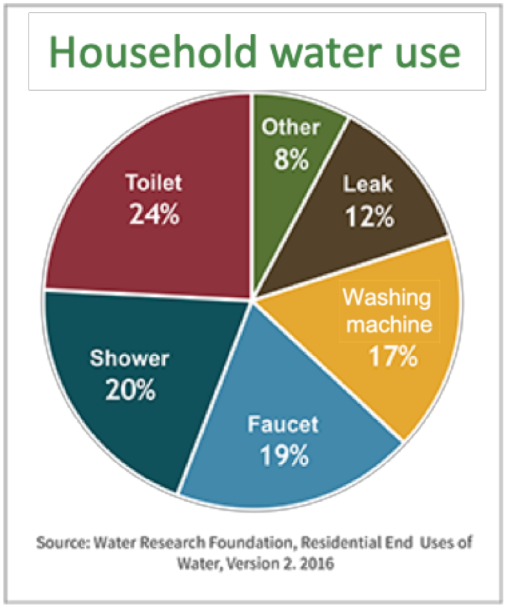
Data on water consumption[1,2]

- We use freshwater for many different things.
- Most freshwater is used for making electricity and in agriculture for irrigation.
- Only about 13% of total freshwater withdrawn is supplied to the public and households.



*Livestock is less than 1% of total use and is not included.

*Data comes from Maupin, M.A., Kenny, J.F., Hutson, S.S., Lovelace, J.K., Barber, N.L., and Linsey, K.S., 2014, Estimated use of water in the United States in 2010: U.S. Geological Survey Circular 1405, 56 p., http://dx.doi.org/10.3133/cir1405.



- The average American family uses more than 300 gallons of water per day at home.
- Roughly 70% of this use occurs indoors and 30% outdoors.

[1] https://www.epa.gov/watersense/how-we-use-water

[2] https://water.usgs.gov/edu/wupt.html

Measuring your water footprint[1,2,3]

Your **water footprint** measures the **total** amount of fresh water you use, including direct and indirect consumption (explained below).

Direct water consumption

This includes all the water you use to drink, cook, shower, and do laundry.

- You can directly measure the volume of water used over a certain time period, such as gallons per day, or liters per minute, etc.

Indirect water consumption

This includes all the water needed to make your food and other stuff that you consume like clothing and electronics.

- This can be measured by how much water it takes to produce a certain amount of an item. For example, it takes 414 gallons of water to produce one large egg.

[1] http://www.gdrc.org/uem/footprints/water-footprint.html

[2] http://www.ejolt.org/2012/12/virtual-water-and-water-footprint/

[3] https://waterfootprint.org/en/water-footprint/product-water-footprint/