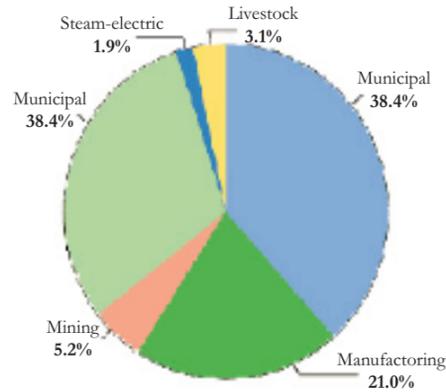


What is Water?

The essential elements for life on earth are Water, (composed of Oxygen and Hydrogen) and Air, (composed of Oxygen and other gases). All earth's species consist largely of water. Both an elephant and a human are 70% water. Scientists believe that earth life began in water before spreading to land and air. Space explorers look for signs of water on other planets as a sign that life might have or might still exist there. Water, both liquid and frozen, has been found on Mars and the Moon and indeed on all other planets in our solar system. Comets, which roam through the universe, consist largely of frozen water.

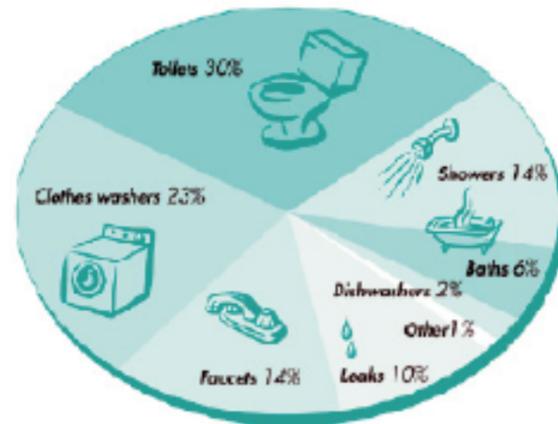
Challenge for the Future

Human population is rising at an astonishing rate. Currently 6.5 billion people populate the earth. By 2050 human population will reach 9 billion. Those billions will all be seeking water, food and resources that today are already stressed. Our oceans have already been stripped of large fish, with many species at extinction levels. Land animal populations are crashing. Essentially humans rely on three grains for most of our food – rice, wheat and corn, which consume large amounts of water to grow. The amount of water on earth has been the same for 2 billion years. There is no more water. So nine billion people will have to share all the existing resources including fresh water, much of which is now polluted. We all must do our part to conserve water in America because we use more water per person than any other peoples on earth. Fortunately we have the technology to clean the water and distribute it where it is needed. The challenge for future generations is to create good governments and good policy to face the water shortage challenge.



We need water to flush the toxins out of our body, to keep our organs hydrated and functioning properly and to control our body temperature. Because we lose our body water through urine and sweat, we must drink 6 to 8 glasses of water a day so we don't become dehydrated. We can live for weeks without food but without water we can't survive more than a few days. Water is absolutely essential for life.

Not only do we need water for our bodies but also we use water in every aspect of our lives. We use water at home for hygiene, sanitation, to clean, to prepare food, to water our plants. Nearly every item we use from food to clothes to cars uses water in its manufacture. Even the production of gas uses lots of water. Agriculture uses the most fresh water. Some foods like lettuce are nearly all water.



How we use water in our homes.

The water we depend on is freshwater. Of all the water on earth, only 2.5% is fresh - the rest is salt water. And of the all fresh water on earth more than 90% of it is locked in the ice in Antarctica. When that ice melts, as it is doing now due to global warming, it goes into the ocean and mixes with salt water.

What You Can Do To Conserve Water

Americans use more water than any other people on earth so we must be careful of the amount of the water we use. Every drop counts!

1. Take short showers
2. Turn off the faucet when you brush your teeth
3. Reduce water use at home
4. Collect rain water in barrels to use on plants
5. Don't use chemicals on your lawns
6. Drink tap water

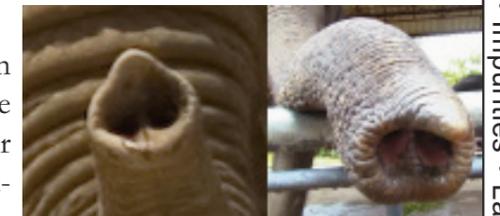
Bottled water can be up to 1000 times more expensive than tap water and it may not be as safe.

Water Facts

- *All the water on earth is stored in oceans, in ice, underground or in the atmosphere as water vapor.
- *Water is the only substance that is found naturally on earth in three forms: liquid, gas, solid.
- *Water regulates the earth's temperature.
- *More than 70 % of the earth's surface is covered with water.
- *The overall amount of water on our planet has remained the same for two billion years.
- *The same water that existed on the earth millions of years ago is still present today.
- *The water molecules you drink today may have been drunk by our distant ancestors or even by dinosaurs.
- *In a 100-year period, a water molecule spends 98 years in the ocean, 20 months as ice, about 2 weeks in lakes and rivers, and less than a week in the atmosphere.
- * It takes 2 gallons to brush your teeth, 2 to 7 gallons to flush a toilet, and 25 to 50 gallons to take a shower.

Elephants

Elephants are the largest land mammals. Elephants are found in Africa and Asia in the wild and the world over in zoos. Elephants live as long as most humans, up to 80 years. The elephant's only predator is us. We hunt elephants for their ivory tusks. Due to humans expanding into elephants territory and migration routes being cut by development, they have less room to find food and water. Competition over vital life sustaining water can lead to dangerous confrontations whether between people and animals or people against people. In Namibia elephants have adapted to living in the desert. Now they face double threats of drought and hunters.



Elephant trunks have fingers. African elephants have two (left) and Asian elephants have one (right).

The elephant's trunk is its most unusual feature. The trunk allows the elephant to pick things up, shake trees to get at fruit, suck up water, to smell, and to spray water on their backs to cool down the skin. Elephants also use their trunk as a weapon, sometimes grabbing and throwing a bothersome animal including humans! The trunk is actually a fusion of the nose and upper lip with the tip having two "fingerlike" appendages allowing the elephant to pick up items as small as a blade of grass. Scientists like Katy Payne are proving that elephants have a complicated communication system, or language, mostly vocalized at levels the human ear can't pick up - called infrasound.