



WATER FACTS



SAFE DRINKING WATER ACT • 1974-2004 • PROTECT OUR HEALTH FROM SOURCE TO TAP

Drinking Water Facts And Figures

- Water is the only substance found on earth in three forms solid, liquid, and gas.
- A person can live more than a month without food, but only about a week, depending on conditions, without water.
- 66% of the human body is water; 75% of the human brain is water.
- 75% of a chicken, 80% of a pineapple, and 95% of a tomato is water.
- A person must consume 2.5 quarts of water per day from all sources (drinking, eating) to maintain health.
- Water regulates the earth's temperature. It also regulates the temperature of the human body, carries nutrients and oxygen to cells, cushions joints, protects organs and tissues, and removes wastes.
- It is possible for people today to drink water that was part of the dinosaur era.

Usage

- Industries as well as people need water. It takes, on average, 39,090 gallons of water to manufacture a new car and its four tires.
- 62,600 gallons of water are needed to produce one ton of steel; 1,500 gallons to process one barrel of beer; and 9.3 gallons to process one can of fruit or vegetables.
- On average, 50-70% of household water is used outdoors (watering lawns, washing cars).
- The average American uses over 100 gallons of water per day; the average residence uses over 100,000 gallons during a year.
- Americans drink more than 1 billion glasses of tap water per day.

Infrastructure

- The average cost for water supplied to a home in the U.S. is about \$2.00 for 1,000 gallons, which equals about 5 gallons for a penny.
- It costs over \$3.5 billion to operate water systems throughout the United States each year.

What You Can Do To Keep Your Drinking Water Safe

Be Aware of Your Water Source & Supplier

- Where does your water come from?
- Who is your water supplier?
- Has your water been tested recently?
- Is it tested regularly?
- How is it treated and protected from contamination?
- Have water shortages occurred in your community?
- Conserve water in the home or on the Farm
- Improve water use and management practices.
- Repair leaking faucets and toilets.
- Understand crop needs for water and irrigate appropriately.
- Water your lawn wisely.
- Take short showers.
- Turn off the water while brushing your teeth.
- Turn off the hose while washing your car.

Minimize the Production of Waste

- Compost vegetable waste.
- Recycle newspapers, aluminum cans, glass containers.
- Don't buy more of anything than you can use.
- Recycle used motor oil, batteries, paints, solvents, and chemicals.
- Think of the impact of what you do on water quality.

Wisely Use and Dispose of Household Lawn & Garden Chemicals

- Follow all directions carefully.
- Use only what you need.
- Sponsor or participate in pesticide collection/disposal activities.

Learn the Facts About Your Water

- Look for and read your consumer confidence report (annual water quality report). Call your water supplier to get a copy.
- Don't believe everything you hear or read in advertisements - get the facts.
- Review results of drinking water tests in your community.
- Attend public meetings.
- Follow the news about drinking water matters, such as the development of new standards.
- Learn about potential contamination sources of ground water and surface water.

Get Involved in Your Community

- Urge your water supplier and state and local regulatory and health officials to ensure that your water supply complies with all standards.
- Support efforts to educate the public and elected officials about the need to protect and improve the quality of drinking water.
- Express willingness to pay higher water rates, if necessary, to finance improvements in water quality.
- Support efforts to protect water supplies.

For More Information

To learn more about drinking water, call the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791 or visit the safewater web site at www.epa.gov/safewater.