

## DON'T BE A WATER GUZZLER!



*Some hoses use up to 30 litres of water a minute.*

*It is general knowledge that South Africa is a water scarce country. No matter where we live we can all do our bit to save this precious resource.*

South Africa has been blessed with a lot of rain lately, but we should not be fooled into thinking that this improves the country's overall water situation. Water will always be scarce here (after all we are one of the 30 driest countries in the world). This means we all need to do our bit to save water. In this issue of Water Kidz, we give some tips on how to save a lot of drops.

### SAVING WATER AT HOME

Doing little things at home can go a long way in saving water. Did you know that a dripping tap losing one drop

a second will waste 15 litres of water a day? Dripping taps and leaky toilets can account for as much as 5% of all water used inside the home. This means fixing those leaks will not only save water, but money as well. If it is a hot water tap that is leaking it is even more expensive since the water replacing the leaking hot water in the geyser needs to be heated. Luckily most leaks are relatively easy and inexpensive to repair.

The toilet is one of the biggest sources of leaks in the home. In fact, a leaky toilet can waste up to 100 000 litres of water a year. That is enough to take three full baths every day! If you hear water trickling into the bowl long after you have flushed the toilet, it is leaking. Another way to check for leaks in the toilet is to try and press a piece of toilet paper against the inside back surface of the bowl. If the paper gets wet, there is a leak. You can also put a few drops of food colouring into the toilet cistern. Watch the water in the bowl. If after a while it becomes coloured, then you have found a leak!

Bathing is the second highest user of water inside most homes. The average bath holds 150 to 200 litres when filled to the overflow level. Where practical, more than one person in the family should use the same water, for example, young children can bath together. Also, you should preferably not fill the bath to a depth of greater than 100 mm.



*It is a good idea to take a shower instead of a bath.*

Of course, you can always have a quick shower instead. A short shower is more water and energy efficient and the hot water lasts longer if many people want to shower. By turning off the shower taps while you soap up, you will save even more water.

The bathroom is not the only place where water should be conserved in the home. You can also save a lot of water in the kitchen and laundry. Use a bowl instead of leaving the tap on when washing up, and keep cool water in the fridge rather than running the tap to get a cold drink. Using dishwashers or washing machines that are only half full not only wastes water, but electricity as well. You can also save water and power by only boiling the amount of water you need in the kettle.



*Using the dishwasher only when full saves both water and electricity.*



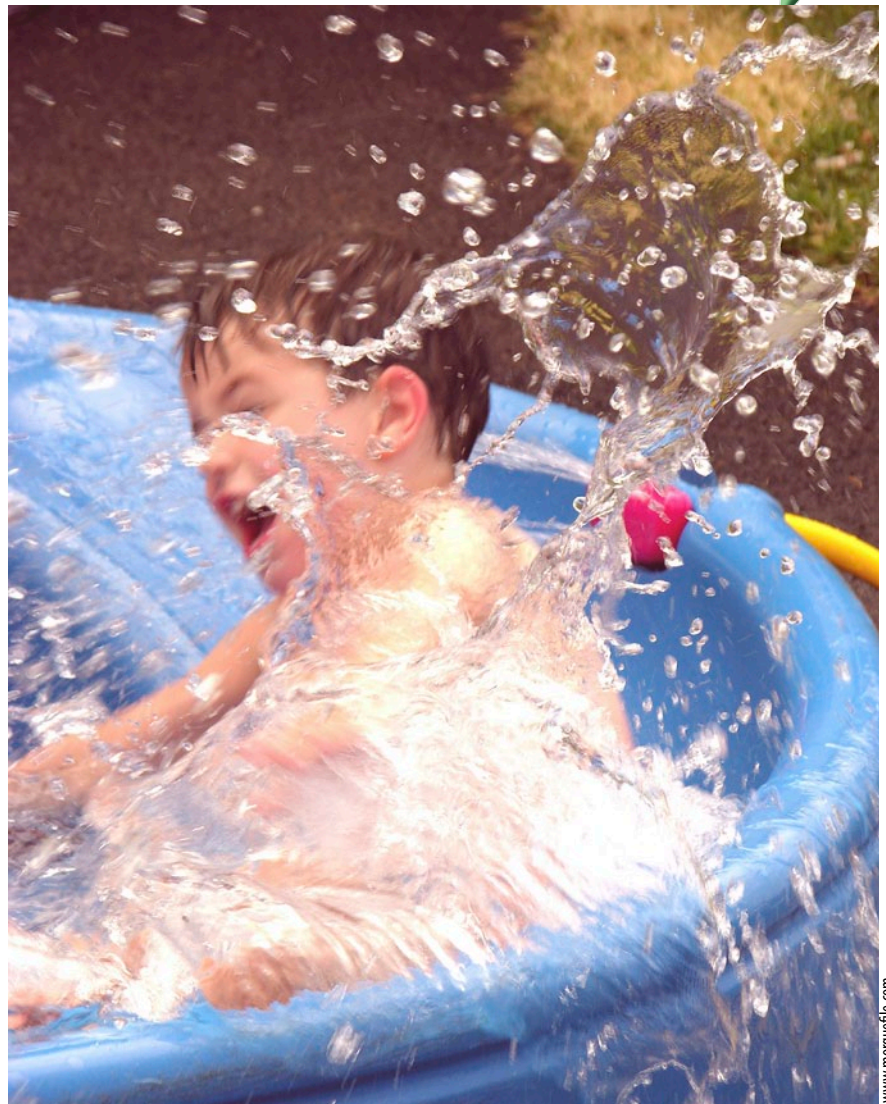
## SAVING WATER IN THE GARDEN

If you have been blessed with a lovely garden you have to water it. But there are lots of ways to save water outside the house too. Speak to your local nursery about planting plants naturally found in the area that are drought tolerant and water thrifty. In spring and summer avoid watering in the middle of the day when evaporation rates are high. By watering less frequently, but rather deeply and thoroughly, you will also conserve water. Ideally, gardens should be watered once a week for half an hour rather than every day for ten minutes.

You can also save water by improving your soil. Feeding your soil with compost and mulch will help to retain plenty of water. The healthier the soil, the greater the penetration and retention of water. Another way of improving the volume of water plants soak up is by digging basins around the bases of trees and shrubs. Collecting rainwater for watering from the roof is another great way of saving water. Remember that this water should not be used for drinking or cooking as it has not been purified.

### ON-LINE SOURCES:

- <http://tlc.howstuffworks.com/home/5-ways-to- conserve-water-at-home.htm>
- <http://www.waterwise.co.za/site/home.html>



www.morguefile.com

***We all love water, which is why we all have a responsibility to conserve it.***

## WHERE WATER GOES IN THE HOME

Place	Non-water saving family	Water saving family
<b>Bath</b>	2 baths at a depth of 150 mm = <b>180 litres</b>	1 bath at a depth of 100 mm = <b>60 litres</b>
<b>Shower</b>	2 showers at 7,5 l/min, for 5 minutes each = <b>75 litres</b>	3 showers at 6 l/min, for 4 minutes each (close taps while soaping) = <b>70 litres</b>
<b>Wash basin</b>	Water used freely = <b>30 litres</b>	Water used carefully = <b>20 litres</b>
<b>Toilet</b>	16 uses at 12 l per flush = <b>190 litres</b>	Volume of flush reduced and short flushes used when necessary = <b>51 litres</b>
<b>Clothes washing machine</b>	5 uses per week = <b>90 litres</b>	5 uses per week = <b>90 litres</b>
<b>Hand washing</b>	Clothing, floors, windows and other = <b>20 litres</b>	Water used sparingly = <b>15 litres</b>
<b>Dish washing</b>	Sink filled with water each time = <b>40 litres</b>	Water used sparingly = <b>20 litres</b>
<b>Cooking and drinking</b>	<b>15 litres</b>	<b>15 litres</b>
<b>Total water used</b>	<b>640 litres</b>	<b>341 litres</b>

Source: A guide to water saving in South Africa by Steve Camp