

# Water

*Companies can save around 30% of their water costs through simple and inexpensive water minimisation measures.* Envirowise

Businesses pay for water twice; once when it is supplied and again for disposal. Conserving water will save money on your water bill and, if you reduce the amount of hot water used, your energy bill too.

## Conserving water is also vital as:

- Water treatment facilities are energy intensive producing carbon dioxide emissions which contribute to climate change.
- Decreasing rainfall and a growing population in London means that less water is available to us all.
- Our water supply comes from rivers and groundwater. When water levels are low wildlife which relies on rivers and ponds can suffer and struggle to survive.

*UK businesses use enough water every year to fill 2.6 million Olympic-sized swimming pools.*  
Envirowise

## Here are a few ways you can make sure that your business is not wasting water and money:

- **Check for leaks.** Look at your water meter when no water is being used, for example at the end of the day. If the water meter index is still moving then you have a leak and need to contact a registered plumber to have it fixed.
- **Put a water displacement device into toilet cisterns over 7.5 litres.** This can save up to 2.5 litres per flush – on average 2,600 litres per employee per year! You can order free Save-A-Flush or Hippo devices from Thames Water at [water.efficiency@thameswater.co.uk](mailto:water.efficiency@thameswater.co.uk)
- **Install passive infrared (PIR) flush control** on urinals so that they flush only when used. PIR control costs only £150- £200 to install and, on average, pays for itself through reduced water bills within 4-6 months.
- **Repair dripping taps.** In most cases a new washer, which only costs a few pence, is all that is needed. This could save as much as 5,500 litres of water over a year.
- **Fit taps which turn off automatically** such as push button or motion sensors taps. These can reduce water use by 20% and payback within 12 months.
- **Fit tap aerators.** These cost only £5 per tap and reduce water flow by 50% without reducing water pressure.
- **Ensure your water pipes are lagged.** This will help prevent them freezing, leaking or even bursting, which can waste large quantities of water. Insulating your pipes will also save you money on your winter heating bills.

If you purchase water efficient products that are on the Water Technology List, such as a PIR flush control system or new taps, you can claim tax relief through the Enhanced Capital Allowance (ECA) Scheme. Your business can write off the whole cost of investment against taxable profits made in the year of the investment. The Water Technology List can be found at [www.eca-water.gov.uk](http://www.eca-water.gov.uk)

*On average, an unmanaged urinal flushes four times an hour, 24-hours a day, using 315,000 litres of water, at a cost of £500/year (based on 2008 prices). Reducing the flush frequency can reduce this to 36,000 litres, which equates to just £57/year! Thames water*



## Top tips...

**1. Monitor your water use** – This will enable you to set targets to reduce the amount of water you use and to see how much money you save by conserving water. Use your previous bills to fill in the table below. If you don't have your bills, start collecting them now.

Year	Consumption Q1 (litres)	Consumption Q2 (litres)	Consumption Q3 (litres)	Consumption Q4 (litres)	Total Annual Consumption (litres)

**2. Create an action plan to reduce your water use** – Set realistic targets to reduce your water use and assign responsibility for monitoring progress to a member of staff who is enthusiastic about environmental issues. Give each action a deadline and where possible make targets measurable.

**3. Involve your staff** – Many staff won't appreciate the cost of water. Make sure that your staff are aware of how important water conservation is and how their actions can make a difference.

## CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from water use...

- For every 1,000 litres of water saved, approximately 1kg of CO<sub>2</sub> is saved. Envirowise
- Replacing bottled water coolers with a mains-fed system could reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 70% and will save money; £1,000 spent on bottled water could cost just 49p if the same volume is taken from the tap.
- A hot water dispenser can reduce energy consumption by 50% compared to a kettle.

## Go one step further...

- **Reduce the amount of harmful chemicals that go into the water supply.** Pollutants in conventional cleaning products are harmful to aquatic life. You can help to reduce water pollution by buying environmentally safer biodegradable cleaning products. These are just as effective as conventional products and commonly available in supermarkets.
- **Collect rainwater in a water butt.** Rainwater is softer than tap water and is therefore better for plants. It can also be used for washing vehicles.

If you would like more information on how to green your business please visit [www.haringey.gov.uk/greenbusiness](http://www.haringey.gov.uk/greenbusiness) or contact the Environmental Resources team at Haringey Council by emailing [environmental.resources@haringey.gov.uk](mailto:environmental.resources@haringey.gov.uk) or calling 020 8489 3528.