**Did You Know?**

* **A person can live** weeks without food, but only days without water. A quarter of the world's population is *without safe drinking water*, and at least 400 million people live in regions with *severe* water shortages.
* **A watershed** is an area of land that drains down slope… eventually arriving at the ocean. It is made up of the land, and the water you can see (such as rivers and lakes) as well as the water we *don’t* see flowing underground. 99% of what happens to a river or lake happens first on the land.
* **Groundwater** can take a human lifetime to travel only one mile. Four litres of gasoline can contaminate approximately 2.8 million litres of water. Groundwater supplies serve about 80% of the population, and up to 4% of usable groundwater is already polluted. Experts claim that if all *new* sources of contamination could be eliminated, in ten years, 98% of all available groundwater would be pollution free.
* In 24 hours, a dripping faucet can waste from 10 to 75 litres of water. A slow toilet leak can waste 1,800 litres a *day* per toilet (that's 450 four-litre milk jugs full). Check toilets for **leaks** by placing a few drops of food colouring in the tank (do not flush), wait 15 minutes, then check the toilet bowl for colour. If you see colour in the bowl, you have a leak.
* About 450 cubic kilometres of **wastewater** are carried into coastal areas by rivers and streams every year. These pollution loads require an additional 6,000 cubic kilometres of freshwater to dilute the pollution. This amount equals two-thirds of the world's total stable run-off.
* **Rain gardens** are natural filters that absorb rainwater running off roofs, driveways and sidewalks, to keep water in our watersheds. Contact *Water Wise* for information on rain gardens.
* About 25,700 litres of water is required to grow a day's **food** for a family of four (equal to 6,425 four-litre milk jugs full). Did you know it takes 16,000 litres to produce one kg of beef, 600 litres for one loaf of bread, and 480 litres to produce one egg.
* **Displacing** just one litre of water will save over 1,000 litres a year (if you flush only three times a day!)… that's 250 four-litre milk jugs full.
* **Lawns** get saturated *very* quickly… they can only absorb 2.5 cm of water at one time. Step on your grass and, if you leave footprints, it's time to water. Place a tuna can on your lawn and water until it is full. Over-watering only leads to shallow root growth.
* **Rabbit feed pellets** (alfalfa) are an environmentally safe and pet-friendly fertilizer; and washing your car on the lawn waters your grass, *and* naturally filters the dirty run-off.
* *Everything we put on the ground and into the air becomes part of the water we use.* Out of every 18 litres of water on the Earth, only three teaspoons is available for us to use. Water regulates the Earth's **temperature**, and the temperature of the human body… and did you know *the human brain, trees, and chickens are all made up of 75% water!*
* In half of the world's households, people (usually women and children) must spend up to five hours a day **collecting water**, often walking 6-8 km to the water source… and two out of every five people in the world will never experience a *clean* glass of water in their lifetime.
* **The average Canadian uses** twice as much water as the average European and *sixty times* as much as the average African. By installing water-wise faucets, shower heads, and retrofitting your old toilet, you can cut your household water consumption by 35-40%
* **Xeriscape gardening** is gardening that uses very little water or fertilizers. There are many different plants and techniques to the art of xeriscape.
* One centimetre of rain falling on an 1,100 square foot roof can collect 1,145 litres of water. With four gutter outflows on each roof, one **rain barrel** can collect approximately 258 litres of water from only one centimetre of rain.
* **Bottled water** uses 1,500,000 tons of plastic a year and toxic chemicals are released into the environment during their manufacturing. Every one litre of bottled water requires *three* litres of water to produce. These plastic bottles leach toxic chemicals into bottled water as it sits and warms up. On average it costs pennies for a litre of tap water, but it costs on average $1.50 for a litre of bottled water - and there are more standards in place regulating municipal tap water than bottled water.