

Saving Water



How our water companies are helping people make the most of a precious resource



The increasing pressures on water resources in this country are having associated impacts on the water environment. We must encourage more sustainable water use to maintain and improve the water environment itself.

Margaret Beckett, Secretary of State, Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Everyone in the UK needs to take on board the fact that water is a precious resource and another dry spell could be just around the corner. Even when it is raining cats and dogs we urge everyone to work on making everyday water efficiency a habit, something that they do instinctively.

Baroness Young, Chief Executive, Environment Agency

We would all agree that it makes no sense to treat money like water, but treating water like money is another matter.

Pamela Taylor, Chief Executive, Water UK

Water UK asked Lis Stedman, environment writer, to research and write this paper.



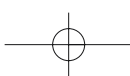
consumers



industry



public sector



Saving water

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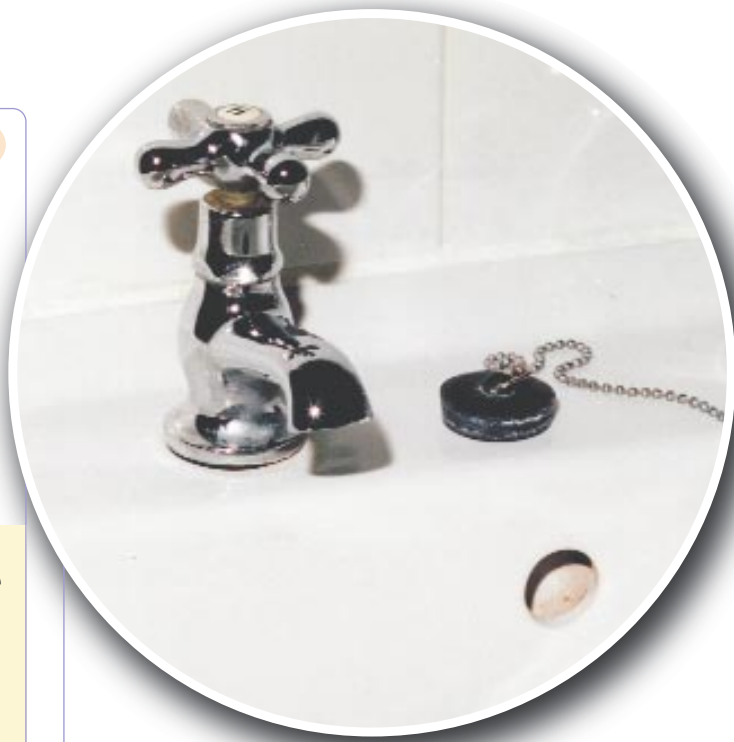
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Introduction

Lifestyle choices, population growth and the climate are placing increasing pressure on water resources and fuelling the need for demand management. There are many influences: the trend towards single-occupancy homes; increasing use of an ever-wider range of water-intensive appliances; Government plans to build a million new homes in the most water-stressed areas.

There are, however, enormous uncertainties about levels and targets of population growth: the population of London alone is predicted to grow by 800,000 by 2016, and the vagaries of population shift add another level of uncertainty to the supply: demand balance. One sure fact is that water usage has soared: today, people use on average 150 litres of water per head per day, 16 litres per day less on average for metered customers than unmetered households, whereas our grandparents used just 18 litres. The total domestic water consumption in the UK during 2002/03 was 8588 megalitres per day (1 megalitre = 1 million litres).

Water meters

One of the challenges companies face in encouraging water efficiency is that just 24% of domestic customers are metered, so economic incentives to save water cannot be given to the majority. Then there are rather mixed messages for companies: Environment Minister Elliott Morley recently gave his backing to more metering in the House of Commons – his response to a question from



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July 2004

Robert Key, MP, was that metering was the most sustainable way to manage the water supply.

On the other hand there have been difficulties in obtaining funding for investigations into the effectiveness of water conservation programmes. In the past water regulation did not provide funds for large-scale water efficiency initiatives. New government guidance should enable pilot studies to be financed in the same way as investigations into bringing new resources online, though this development may have come too late to be included in company plans made for the 2004 water price review.

Priorities

Changing customer mindsets can be a problem: a collaborative project between the Environment Agency and Thames Water, entitled 'The effectiveness of marketing campaigns in achieving water efficiency savings' highlighted problems in communicating with consumers without a relevant economic incentive. A high profile advertising and direct mail campaign was aimed at one community, with a demographically similar area used as a control.

The effectiveness of the campaign was assessed through market research, some direct measurement of water use and customer responses to offers of water-saving devices, and the results were disappointing in terms of behavioural change. Water was regarded as a less important environmental issue than energy, pollution, transport and recycling, and the campaign did not affect this ranking.

Water companies in action

On the positive side, the water companies are working hard to change customer perception. For instance, the industry is currently involved in a study looking at different controls that can be attached to toilets to help reduce the amount of water used in one flush. The results of this collaborative venture of nine participating companies will be fed back to the



Environment Agency, who will analyse the data. It is believed that the move could reduce water consumption in each household by ten per cent, or an average of 11,500 litres per property per year. The industry will then have data from a large sample of properties that will allow a better assessment of how useful these devices could be for large-scale demand management compared with other options. The results will assist companies to prepare for larger studies of the sustainability of the savings and the logistics of major retrofit programmes.

All water companies have vigorous customer awareness campaigns supported by leaflets, press campaigns and offers of free water-saving devices. Many offer cistern displacement devices such as Save-a-Flush displacement bags and Hippo bags – tough plastic bags that sit inside the toilet cistern and reduce the amount of water used with each flush. These provide an effective means of saving water. Most toilets currently use up to nine litres of water per flush; the new standard is a six litre flush which is not appropriate for displacement devices.

Information about water saving is enclosed with annual bills, or in customer magazines. This will include information on how to save water in the home and garden as well as offers on water-saving appliances such as water-efficient washing machines and dishwashers.

Business advice

Assistance is also available for business users. As metered customers, commercial companies should have an incentive to save water and can be more proactively engaged through advice from their water company. Competition is also a spur as water companies are very aware that if they do not offer their largest customers optimum cost-efficiency their competitors will.

Water efficiency advice is a fundamental part of providing a good service for commercial users. Company activities take many forms – Anglian Water and Mid Kent Water, for example with their rural coverage, offer free water audits to

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farmers and most of the companies offer water usage and leakage audits as part of a suite of services for business users.

The companies also work closely with public bodies, particularly local councils, trying to raise awareness with this important sector and the community in general.

The water companies, through Water UK, have recently completed an initiative with NHS Estates to produce water-saving advice for hospitals. There is now standard literature available for each company to use to promote water efficiency to hospitals in its own area.

However, the nature of water and wastewater services is that they are often taken for granted, until they are not there. Despite the considerable year on year savings that can be achieved by business customers through adopting water efficiency measures it has continued to prove difficult to engage many of them in a programme of positive action.

Finding out what works

Research, despite funding constraints, is also an important part of demand management: Southern Water has undertaken a survey of 60,000 customers to obtain information on the coverage of save-a-flush bags, water butts and other water-saving devices, and has collected a great deal of detailed data. Southern's R&D programme has also assessed the performance of four-litre flush toilets, and the potential savings if they were used instead of the maximum six litre flush currently required by water fittings regulations. The company intends to use the results, which were very promising, to promote these water-efficient toilets.

Thames Water is also undertaking two large-scale monitoring exercises, studying water consumption in 2,000 unmetered households that are aware they are being monitored, and a further group that does not know monitoring is taking place. Sophisticated monitoring and comparison of water-using and recycling systems at the Millennium Dome also provided valuable research information. Through the water industry's research body, UKWIR, a great deal of research into demand management and other related topics is undertaken and disseminated to the industry.

Children and water efficiency

Education is vital in putting across the water efficiency message. United Utilities, for example, has six classrooms in its area in North West England, which promote water saving to 9,000 young visitors annually. Many companies provide education packs for schools aimed at various Key Stages – these provide a mix of information, experiments and water-saving information. In the Home Counties, Three Valleys Water have given a free "waterbox" to schools in their area which encourages children to experiment and learn about water and water technology.

Reaching school children and getting them to understand and put into practice the conservation message is an important component of changing behaviour in society as a whole. Through Water UK the industry worked together to develop a website and resources that allow children to work with their teacher on a water conservation project in their school. This initiative is being complemented by the development of a parallel game-based website for children to use on their own.





Consumer demand management

Government help

Encouraging domestic water saving is challenging. A framework for water saving may be created if Government acts on the recommendations in its Sustainable Buildings Task Group report – in future, new homes would be designed with water saving in mind. The report suggests that 'Government should enshrine in regulation by 2005 a 25% saving on average per capita water consumption for new housing compared with the existing stock' as well as tighter minimum standards in the use of water fittings and appliances. From these recommendations it is likely a Code of Practice will be developed. This should provide a framework for best practice that will give guidance to both developers and planning bodies.

Save water, save money

Undoubtedly if Government acts to provide a strong foundation for water efficiency, the water companies' task will be made considerably easier. Companies currently rely on a variety of awareness-raising activities such as press campaigns and leafletting, offers of water-saving devices and informational brochures – a typical example would be Anglian Water's

Waterwise, which gives comprehensive advice on saving water and money.

Partnerships

Practical help is a common feature of domestic demand management. Several companies have roadshows that they take round their areas, providing information on the company in general as well as water-saving advice and offers; some companies in the driest parts of the country offer self-completion water audits and run proactive metering campaigns. Several have developed partnerships with local authorities, housing associations and environmental groups to promote water efficiency.

Three Valleys has been encouraging local employment through its *Working in Herts* partnership. Long-term unemployed people have been trained to undertake water and energy saving audits.

Southern Water has undertaken a project in which 460 of its customers tested a tap insert device called 'Tapmagic' that reduces water flow. A water saving of 52% per hand wash was achieved, with users recouping the cost of the device in seven months. The company has one of the longest-running travelling roadshows, featuring the 'Drip' family, which takes a fun, water-conscious message to schools.



Case study – building in conservation

Essex and Suffolk Water's Heybridge trials.

In discussions with local planners Essex & Suffolk Water discovered that developers were keen to build more water efficient homes but needed guidance on which products to use and the measures customers found most acceptable. To address these issues the company set up its Sustainable New Homes project, in collaboration with the Building Research Establishment.

This project was one of the most thorough trials ever undertaken into consumer water usage and possible ways to reduce it, and it subsequently won a Water Efficiency Award. The scheme involved Essex and Suffolk installing and monitoring a range of water efficient appliances and devices within a housing development in Heybridge, near Maldon, to produce a specification for new homes for use within the building industry and local town planning departments. The results provided a considerable insight into human nature as well as the effectiveness of the various water efficiency measures, which has provided a solid grounding for future product and water-efficient housing development.

Since that trial, Essex and Suffolk has undertaken further research. As all of its metering and logging equipment was still there, it retrofitted 6/3 litre dual flush toilets at eight houses on the trial site, partnered by sanitary ware manufacturer Caroma and the site's housing association, Plume Housing. The results showed that an average of eight litres per person per day was saved by using the lower-flush devices.

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Water audits

Essex & Suffolk Water recently worked with 9,500 households on a self-audit scheme that encouraged participants to install various water saving devices including Save-a-Flush displacement bags in toilets, hose guns, shower timers and tap washers to repair dripping taps. Initial calculations show that the project resulted in water savings of over 94,000 litres per day – an average of 9.91 litres per household per day.

In all, the company has offered over 96,000 customers a water audit, either undertaken by the company or by customers using a DIY pack, and at least 24,000 audits have been completed. The company is planning to continue this work and wants to work with the Scouts, develop a children's audit pack and work with housing associations and the Institute of Plumbers.

Bristol Water promotes a different type of cistern water-saving device – the company's 'Have you got the bottle?' campaign, encouraging customers to place a one-litre plastic bottle in the cistern – a simple, cheap way of saving water. At open days, the company gives away suitable containers – old sample bottles from its laboratories. Bristol estimates that if every

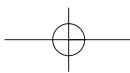
household in its area put a bottle in the toilet cistern, it would need to abstract 2,000 million litres less water a year from the environment.

In the garden

Gardening is another focus for activity: Bristol has a water-saving garden, built as part of its 150th anniversary celebrations in 1996, which showcases drought-tolerant plants and water-saving techniques such as a recycling fountain, rainwater collection and various types of mulch. Essex and Suffolk Water sponsors a magnificent 'dry garden' at the Royal Horticultural Society's Hyde Hall gardens in Essex, and many of the companies offer information on water-conscious gardening, targeting the hot summer months when water usage in the garden rises dramatically. A number of companies have sponsored Gardening Which? to develop a drought resistant garden at Capel Manor in Hertfordshire.

In a similar vein, Southern Water sponsors South-East and South in Bloom, highlighting water efficiency messages. It also works with the Royal Horticultural Society, and regularly supports exhibits with a water-saving theme at the Chelsea Flower Show. Thames Water has helped develop water-wise gardens at Kew Garden and London Zoo.





Industrial demand management

The business case

This category encompasses a vast range of customers, all of whom are on meters and for whom water savings equate to monetary savings: factories; office buildings; conference centres; hotels and private leisure complexes. Getting the water-efficiency message across to commercial customers is a vital strand of companies' demand management strategies.

Because of the financial advantage this should in theory be less problematic than persuading domestic consumers to save water. The message is beginning to get through: in some parts of the country, notably the North East and Northumbrian Water's Essex and Suffolk area, commercial demand is already falling as customers become aware of the money they can save by using less water.

Tax savings on the web

One other major incentive is the web-based Water Technology List, launched last year by Environment Minister Elliot Morley, which details products that promote sustainable water use. The List gives information on products registered by water technology manufacturers and suppliers that meet published water efficiency criteria. Businesses purchasing products on the List will save money on their water bills and can also claim up-front tax relief on their spending through

Case study – stopping leaks on holiday

Severn Trent Water recently undertook a major leak-finding project at the Center Parcs village in Sherwood Forest. The company faced a difficult challenge on the extended 400ha site, which can accommodate 4,000 customers. Severn Trent identified increased water usage at the Center Parcs site, and soon realised that increased guest consumption was not the reason. Severn Trent's Network Guardian system initially detected 61 leaks, which it repaired, and when water consumption rose again out of season it went back, detecting and repairing a further 14 leaks. Curing these leaks saved an estimated 107,950m³ of water, meaning that Center Parcs was able to repay its investment in water saving within eight months. Water costs went down by £12,000 in the first year after the work was completed.

Case study – efficiency is sweet

Another major project involved helping chocolate manufacturer Thorntons to monitor its Derbyshire plant's discharge and water consumption information, using Severn Trent's Data Monitor service. The company provided an internet-based service that gave Thorntons remote access to its water supply and effluent metered data, as well as an account manager to help the company make the most of the data supplied.

As the data is on the internet, the company can check consumption daily or even hourly. The service also allows Thorntons to monitor night-time usage – critical for detecting leaks and unsuspected wastage, such as toilets flushing automatically in the night.

100% first-year enhanced capital allowances (ECA).

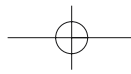
Business to business

Examples of company work being undertaken are United Utilities' 'Get waterwise in the workplace' initiative, which raises awareness of the financial and environmental benefits of water efficiency for companies and their employees. As part of this, UU offers guidance and practical advice to businesses, organises water awareness days and provides posters for display in washrooms. This project also encourages employees to be water-wise in the home. Thames Water distributes water efficiency benchmarking leaflets to offices, and has undertaken seven free water efficiency audits of its business customers. The majority of companies work proactively in this sector: distributing water-saving devices, advice leaflets, and providing one-to-one advice and audits to help commercial customers achieve water efficiency.

Through Water UK the industry is supporting The Big Splash, the Government's challenge to all UK industry to encourage water minimisation and promote the cost saving benefits. Participating companies can receive industry specific guidance and grants.

To be taken with water efficiency

United Utilities has helped AstraZeneca with

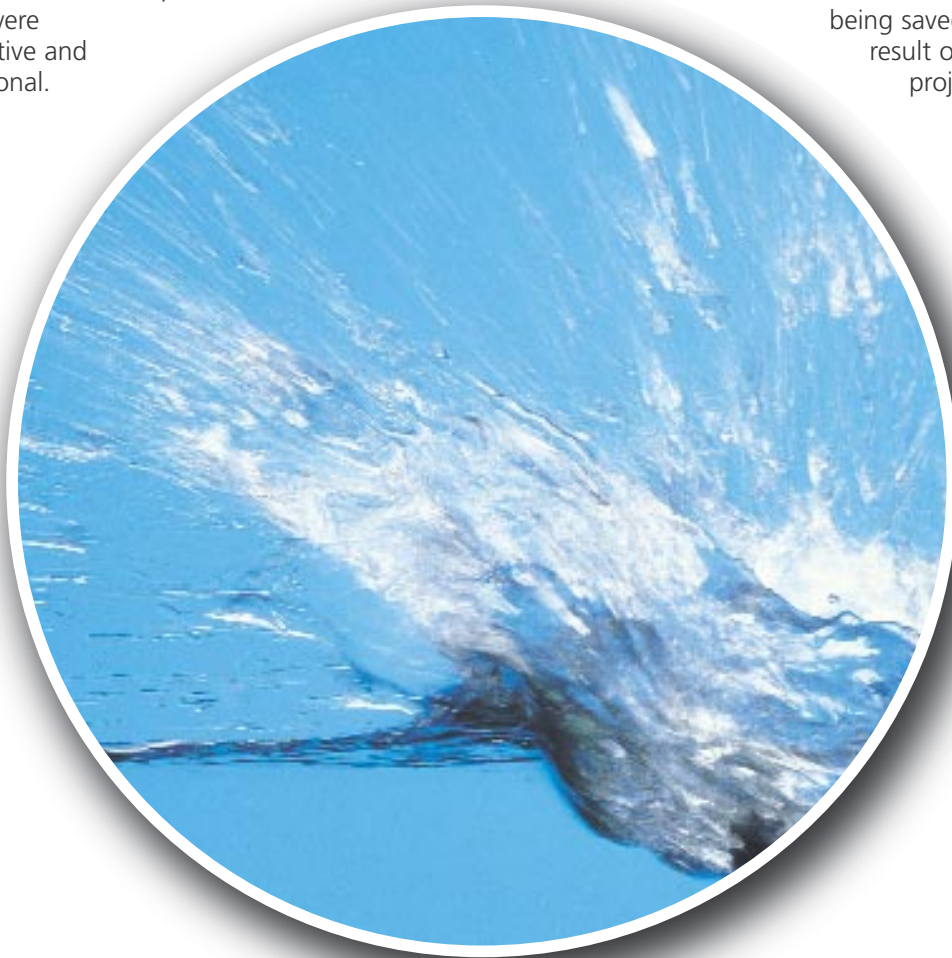


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its water efficiency drive – recently, it was approached to assist in creating informative displays to be used across the chemicals giant's Cheshire sites for World Environment Day. AstraZeneca's chosen theme this year was water, and how use could be minimised at work and in the home. AstraZeneca's Environmental Technical Manager Gemma Roberts said: 'United Utilities provided us with excellent displays for the two Cheshire sites, which were informative and professional.'

UU also provided many giveaways, which went down well with staff at all levels.'

Thanks to advice from UU, AstraZeneca is now considering installing sensor taps at its Macclesfield site to minimise water usage. The open day had 'huge employee buy-in,' according to AstraZeneca, and any initiatives taken that relate to work are to be collated and used to advertise how much water is being saved as a result of the project.





Public sector demand management

Duty and incentive

The 2003 Water Act placed a new requirement on the Secretary of State with regard to water conservation: to report the savings made by public bodies periodically, probably every three years. This document will include details of measures that have been taken over the reporting period as well as proposed measures for the future.

A further duty to conserve is placed on public bodies generally. A wide variety of types of institution fall into this category, all supported

Case study – local authority benefits

Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council has enjoyed a good working relationship with United Utilities for a number of years since the introduction of Key Customer Managers. John Halsall, UU's current Key Customer Manager, has provided advice and guidance on a number of issues including burst claims, meter downsizing, invoice queries, leak detection, conservation ideas and promotional materials.

Most recently, United Utilities accepted an invitation from the council to attend the annual Energy Day, where the company showpiece its 'big loo,' as a central attraction while providing advice on a number of issues to council staff.

The Council's Energy Unit has also worked with United Utilities on a number of billing issues which recently resulted in refunds to the authority of approximately £100,000.

Altogether, the actions taken have saved over £500,000 for the council, and total school water usage in the area has dropped by 25 % since 1990, when the council began water-saving initiatives in schools and its operational buildings.

Mark Wrigley, Oldham's Environmental Policy Officer, said: 'Without doubt there are huge benefits to be gained from investing in water efficiency measures. The financial implications for any body could be large whilst reducing water usage and creating a culture of awareness amongst staff will also contribute to reduce CO2 emissions. My advice for any public body would be to contact your water company and find out if they have a Key Customer contact to help forge a good working relationship.'

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by local or national taxation: hospitals, leisure centres, police stations, local authority buildings and estates, and educational establishments.

Could do better

This sector's water efficiency record is historically not good, and there is little positive incentive to save – the public sector cannot access the Enhanced Capital Allowance scheme that enables commercial companies to gain tax benefits from installing water-efficient devices. Accessing the initial cash needed to undertake investment in water-efficiency measures can also be problematic for such organisations.

It is likely that the 2003 Water Act reporting duty on the Secretary of State, and the water conservation clauses that affect public bodies will stimulate activity in this sector. It may also have a knock-on effect in terms of local authorities' planning duties – they may not only look at the way they operate their own water-using facilities but also influence, through the planning regime, a wide range of other bodies.

Figures are available for at least one area of public sector water usage. Research by the Funding Agency for Schools on school water use shows that primary school sites consumed between 2,860 and 4,730 litres per pupil per year (LPY), with secondary schools using between 3,650 LPY and 5,440 LPY. The Audit Commission has set a benchmark of 4,000 LPY for schools to achieve and the figures suggest many schools could do better.

Public private partnerships

Last year Southern Water conducted an intensive campaign of promoting water audits to schools in Hastings, with its inspector being invited to audit 12 out of 20 schools approached. This was backed by a funding offer from the Environment Agency. Northumbrian Group has also been working with schools: Wharrior Street school in Newcastle is going to be used to demonstrate water efficiency best practice. The school has already been given a preliminary audit that identified several large leaks, amounting to 7000 litres a day.

Northumbrian has also provided the North East Purchasing Organisation (NEPO), formed by a group of local councils, with water efficiency advice and has worked in partnership on a number of projects. For example, South Tyneside has been trialling a pro-forma for caretakers since September

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2002 that enables them to measure their buildings' water efficiency.

Thames Water has been working with North London Waste Watch and many of the London boroughs, with a particular focus last year on Camden, Haringey and Islington. The

company has also been involved in various activities outside the Greater London area in partnership with Croydon, Kingston, Slough and Cherwell borough councils as well as Oxford City Council, and has been undertaking water audits at schools in Reading.



A water-wise future

For anyone on a meter, there is a financial incentive to save water. This is at the margins for most domestic customers because of the relatively low price of water, but larger commercial and industrial customers can make real savings.

For domestic customers in general, water companies are backing strongly the message that saving water also helps to save the environment. Without a clear financial benefit this has proved challenging. Yet the companies appreciate the potential benefits of effective demand management and year by year are expanding and improving their work with customers, offering practical help, water-saving devices and expert advice.

Significant savings

The potential looks enormous. Consumer water efficiency could be a real winner. Simply putting a cistern water-saving device in a single toilet would save over 4,000 litres a year and turning off the tap while brushing teeth more than 17,000. By taking a shower instead of a bath you could save more than 18,000 litres. Given that the UK has some 23 million households the scope for conservation is obvious. However with changing regulations and appliances information has to be kept up to date. For example the switch to dual flush toilets will result in cistern replacement devices becoming redundant over time. The use of power showers needs to be monitored and their consumption compared with bath use.



For companies, the expense, time and difficulty of developing new resources such as reservoirs and groundwater abstraction systems means working for water conservation comes naturally. Even companies in parts of the country where water is plentiful promote water efficiency; saving the cost of water treatment alone is a significant consideration.

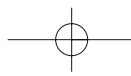
Future challenges

However there does remain some uncertainty about the effectiveness of water efficiency measures over the long-term and the sustainability of the savings made.

Companies need to keep their activities constantly under review. However, they do not shy away from the challenge of persuading customers to accept advice and change their attitudes and behaviour. It is a fundamental part of the industry's work to ensure that demand management makes the maximum possible contribution to coping with a changing environment and improving resource productivity.

But water companies also need the support of regulators and government to make a step change in releasing the long-term benefits of water sustainability. They are championing water efficiency with all their stakeholders and constantly looking for new ways to advance this work. The enhanced duty to conserve in Water Act 2003 provides new incentives for everyone involved.

Active cooperation between the industry, regulators and Ministers now looks the best way of creating a culture that rejects waste and puts a true value on the benefits of a secure water supply.



Online resources

A look at what's available on company websites

Collaborative projects include: www.waterintheschool.co.uk. The 'Water in Schools' website provides everything a school needs to establish and run a water conservation project. Another site in development is www.waterpeople.co.uk.

Anglian Water: www.anglianwater.co.uk. Provides customer information in 'Ten tips to be water wise' and 'Water use – how you can save money and water' Also Home and Garden water audit guides.

Bournemouth and West Hampshire Water: www.bwhwater.co.uk. 'Waterwise' section has bullet point information for home, garden, winter precautions, summer water saving, consumption information, metering and leak repair offers. Also information for schools on water conservation.

Bristol Water: www.bristolwater.co.uk. Includes schools 'Be Water Wise' education pack and 'Inflow' a magazine for business customers with a focus on water management.

Cambridge Water: www.cambridge-water.co.uk. Extensive home and garden water-saving advice, and offer of a free 'Hippo' cistern device.

Dee Valley Water: www.deevalleygroup.com. Information for domestic and business customers.

Dwr Cymru Welsh Water: www.dwrcymru.co.uk. Home and business DIY water audit publication. 'Using water wisely' and 'Making sure there is water' information for customers.

Essex and Suffolk Water: www.eswater.co.uk offers a wide range of water-saving advice and information about the Water21 home audit programme.

Folkestone & Dover Water: www.fdws.co.uk has a water efficiency section with useful advice, offers of low-cost leak repair on customer pipes and tips on water-saving in the garden.

Mid Kent Water: www.midkent.co.uk offers extensive advice on saving water in the home and garden, including a link to the BBC's water

watcher website where customers can decide if they are water watchers or wasters. The site also offers school information packs and visits and has a water butt kit offer.

Northern Ireland Water Service: www.waterni.gov.uk Water efficiency plans, water saving tips and water conscious gardens for customers. Educational materials for children.

Northumbrian Water: www.nwl.co.uk has an online calculator to help customers work out how much water they use and gives details of water efficiency projects undertaken by both Northumbrian Water and Essex and Suffolk Water.

Portsmouth: www.portsmouthwater.co.uk has useful tips on saving water at home, in the business and in the school, including contacts for further help. Information for schools looks at all aspects of water saving including how to conduct a water audit and set up a water management plan.

Scottish Water: www.scottishwater.co.uk. Company provides information for domestic customers in 'Water efficient living' and a specific programme on 'Creating a water efficient business' including tailor-made workshops for business customers.

Severn Trent Water: www.severntrent.co.uk has a 'save water' section among a list of other customer services. There's a long list of handy tips for saving water around the house, in the garden and for car-washing, as well as advice on coping with frost and leaks in the home. Customers can also order a save-a-flush bag from the site.

South East Water: www.southeastwater.co.uk has a water usage calculator on the home page. A comprehensive Flash-enabled section provides water saving tips for the home and garden. Business customers are offered an e-metering service, which allows them to analyse water consumption on line, and are provided with information on South East's water efficiency audit scheme.

South Staffordshire Water: www.south-staffs-water.co.uk contains domestic water saving tips, as well as two downloadable leaflets that provide advice on saving water in the home and business. The site has an offer of a free Hippo cistern device and has a suite of teacher resources. The Kids section also provides water-saving advice and information on school trips – days out include water conservation advice.

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South West Water:

www.southwestwater.co.uk. The company provides a suite of water conservation publications: The home water checklist 'The Squirty Dozen – 12 ways to save water in the home and garden'. Also a conservation roadshow visiting events throughout the summer. Online leak reporting service and a variety of customer advice.

Southern Water: www.southernwater.co.uk has demand management advice for businesses, domestic customers and schools, which is also available in leaflet form – in the last WaterVoice review this was named the 'Rolls-Royce of water audits'.

Sutton and East Surrey: www.waterplc.com contains information on conserving water as well as teacher resources. There's also a Key Stage 2 information pack featuring the company's 'Flo' and 'Squirt' characters. In the Library section, there is home and garden water-saving advice and information on a domestic leak detection and repair scheme.

Tendring Hundred: www.thws.co.uk has information on water efficiency in the home and garden, how to check for leaks, and advice on business water efficiency as well as an offer of free Hippo bags.

Three Valleys: www.3valleys.co.uk offers a downloadable booklet of advice on home water efficiency, and the site has an online water usage calculator. There is also downloadable advice for businesses.

Thames Water: www.thameswateruk.co.uk/waterwise has a fun 'Splash Gordon' water-wise game, extensive kids section and wide-ranging information on domestic water saving. There is also information for business customers, with advice for hospitals, offices and hotels and useful benchmarking details.

United Utilities: www.unitedutilities.co.uk. Customers can order a free save-a-flush device and the 'water-saving ideas' section gives tips for household and garden water efficiency. For business customers, information is provided on the company's 'Flow Watch' service.

Yorkshire Water: www.yorkshirewater.com contains advice on rainwater/greywater harvesting and an offer of a free desktop water conservation calendar, which comes with a save-a-flush device. There are also sections on water-saving opportunities in the home and garden, and frost-proofing pipes. For businesses, there is information on how Yorkshire can help companies to conserve water, including on-site surveys and sub-metering, as well as an advice line number for leakage and flow monitoring.

Wessex Water: www.wessexwater.co.uk has a business customer service with contacts for water efficiency advice. A free water efficiency pack is available for domestic customers and the site contains tips on saving water through fixing dripping taps and leaks, as well as advice on faulty plumbing. The company's extensive literature for schools, which includes conservation advice, is previewed.

