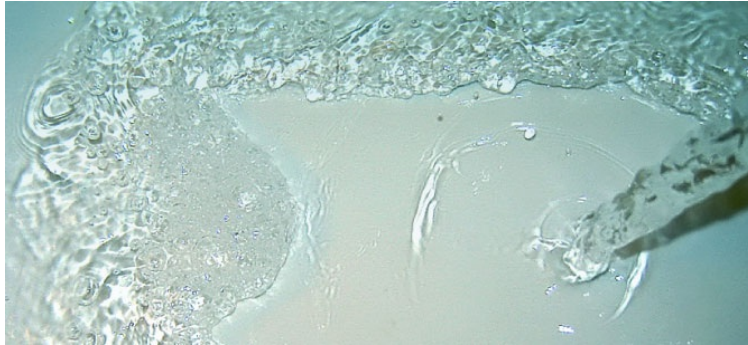




# World Water Day: Five simple water saving strategies

Published on 22 Mar 2013 | Written by [Batya Metalitz](#) | Posted in [Industry](#)



Water is the most essential need of living beings, yet the value we place on it is so low.

Water is cheap and easily accessible in the developed world, but it's being wasted and contaminated at an alarming rate. In honor of World Water Day, here are some simple water saving strategies that make a difference.

### Take a look at your habits.

Imagine your water was turned off and you only had one gallon to use for the day. What would you cut out of your routine?

1. **Don't leave it running.** If you're not using water while you brush your teeth or wash the dishes, turn it off. It'll still be there when you need it again, I promise.
2. **Don't prewash.** Dishwashers do a pretty good job of getting your dishes clean without hand washing first. [According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#) and others, machine dishwashing *instead* of hand washing actually saves water, money and our ever-decreasing personal time - like 230 hours per year. Yikes!

### Simple retrofits

3. **Aerators.** These simple mesh devices can be installed on most faucets. They infuse water coming out of the faucet with air so the pressure and quantity feels higher than it really is. This simple retrofit costs a few dollars and can save many gallons of water. Plus it's rewarded in LEED credits [like this one](#).
4. **Toilets.** If it's older than 1994, replace your toilet. Toilets aren't free but they are relatively affordable, and should be replaced as they get old and leaky anyway. Toilet efficiency has come a long way since the 90s, in large part because of legislation that nearly halved the allowable water used for flushing. If you're looking for one home improvement that can save water this is a great investment.

### Consider the climate

5. **Landscape.** Many of us have plants, grass or landscapes that don't belong in our climate. As people moved around the world, they've brought plants from rainy climates like England, to dry climates like Arizona. That plant may have sustained easily on the rainfall in its native climate, but it becomes a drain (pun intended) on the water supply in a drier climate. Can you replace some of your lawn with [native plants](#)? You'll get [LEED points](#) for it too!

LEED concentrates on the changes that can be made to a building or project to improve water efficiency, but the truth is that individual behavior is the biggest source of savings when it comes to water. Have a water bill? Take a look at your usage and see if you can reduce it for next month. Sometimes just being a little more aware of your behavior can make a huge difference.

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