

Home water audit

Do you know how much water your household uses?
A home water audit can help.

By monitoring how much water you use and fixing
leaks promptly, you can save water and money.

How much water do you use?

There are several ways to measure your water use:

- ◆ Check your rates notice. This may show your household's daily water consumption, as well as an average figure for households in your area.
- ◆ Check your water meter, which is generally located in the ground outside, towards the front of the property.
- ◆ Use this handy audit table to find out how much water you use at home.

By checking your water consumption monthly, you can quickly detect any unexplained increases in water use that indicate a possible leak.

Are your appliances water-efficient?

If your appliances are reasonably new, the manufacturer's product information will tell you how much water they use. When buying new appliances, choose those with a higher water efficiency rating where possible. The water rating label on the product will help you identify the most water-efficient products—look for four stars or better. The more stars, the more you'll save.

If your appliances are older, you can use your water meter to work out how much water each appliance uses. To do this, ensure all water-using devices are turned off and then record the water meter reading. Use only one appliance while all other water-using devices remain switched off. When the appliance is finished, check the meter reading again. The difference in the meter readings is the amount of water, in litres, used by the appliance. For more information please refer to the *Detecting leaks and reading your water meter* information sheet available from <www.derm.qld.gov.au/waterwise>.

Alternatively, contact a licensed plumber to help determine the water consumption of individual appliances and your overall household.

A simple audit checklist

Complete the checklist below to work out approximately how much water you use and where you use the most water. Use the water usage calculator overpage to help you estimate quantities. The total could be compared with the water usage on your water bill. Any major discrepancies may be due to undetected leaks, requiring further investigation by a licensed plumber.

Water Use	No. of people in home (A)	No. of uses per week (B)	Litres of water per use (C)	Total per week (AxBxC)
Toilet				
Shower				
Bath				
Teeth cleaning				
Shaving				
Washing hands				
Drinking				
Washing dishes				
Dishwasher				
Washing machine				
Inside cleaning such as showers, floors				
Washing cars/bikes/boats				
Washing pets				
Watering gardens/lawns				
Outside cleaning such as driveway, balconies				
Pool/spa/water features				
Cooking/food prep				
Other				
			Total	

More information

Visit the Department of Environment and Resource Management website <www.derm.qld.gov.au/waterwise>.

Water usage calculator

Location	End use	Litres of water used
Bathroom	Toilet: dual flush 6/3 (or 4.5/3) single flush only	3 litres per half flush or 6/4.5 litres per full flush 11 litres per flush
	Shower	6–11 litres per minute
	Bath	120 litres per filled bath
	Brushing teeth: with water running with a cup	3 litres per minute 0.5 litre per person
	Shaving: with water running with a cup	3 litres per minute 0.5 litre per person
	Washing hands with water running	3 litres per minute
	Cleaning showers: with the shower running with a bucket	6–11 litres per minute 9 litres per filled bucket
	Kitchen	Washing dishes: by hand dishwasher
Drinking		2 litres per person per day
Laundry	Washing clothes: by hand	22 litres per half-filled laundry trough
	washing machine: front loader top loader	40 litres per load (4 star WELS rated) 63 litres per load (4 star WELS rated) Older machines up to 130 litres per load
Outdoors	Washing outdoors, including pets, furniture, car: using running hose using a filled bucket	15 litres per minute 9 litres per bucket
	Watering gardens: with a hose with a sprinkler	15 litres per minute 9–15 litres per minute
	Hosing driveways/pavements	15 litres per minute
	Topping up pool/spa/water features:	15 litres per minute
Leaks	Leaks: slow-dripping tap leak toilet cistern leak pool/spa small leak	3–27 litres per day 10 litres per day (barely visible) to 260 litres per day (large) 130 litres per week

All figures quoted are approximate. Please use the figure you feel best represents your household water usage.