

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 for the product with the most stars.

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.dews.qld.gov.au>.

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
Other waterwise information is available at <www.dews.qld.gov.au>

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 | 15 litres per half-filled sink 7 litres per load (5 star WELS rated) Older dishwashers up to 25 litres per load |
| | Drinking | 2 litres per person per day |
| Laundry | Washing clothes: by hand | 22 litres per half-filled laundry trough |
| | washing machine* (e.g. 6kg load capacity) | 30 litres per load (6 star WELS rated) 88 litres per load (3 star WELS rated) Older machines up to 180 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.

* Check WELS rating at www.waterrating.gov.au