



Challenge: DON'T FLUSH THAT TOILET!

The Scoop: The average American uses 80-100 gallons of water *every* day, for everything from brushing our teeth to washing the dishes. All that usage means we're depleting the earth's natural water resources much faster than it can be replenished. An easy thing we can all do to help the environment is to reduce our daily water usage. In this challenge, you'll estimate how much water you normally use, and then see if you can reduce that amount by making small, easy changes in your daily life.

What You'll Need:

- Paper and a pen or pencil
- Calculator (optional)

The Challenge: For *an entire day*, from the time you wake up until you go to sleep, add up the number of gallons of water you use during the day. Don't forget to include any water you drink! You can use the table below to guide you. Then, come up with changes you can make to conserve water, and do the test again on a different day, using your conservation ideas. Write down how much water you use on this day and compare it to your first day of monitoring. Is there any difference?

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Approximate water usage</u>
Toilet flush	3.5 gallons
Brushing teeth	1.0 gallons per minute
Hand dishwashing	2.0 gallons per minute
Shower or bath	4.0 gallons per minute running water
Washing your hands	1.0 gallons per minute
1 cup of water	0.125 gallons

Stuff to Think About:

- Did you notice anything you do that wastes water?
- What things did you do to try and conserve water? Did it make any difference?
- What happens to the water after it goes down the drain?
- If water is something natural on the earth, why do we have to pay for it?