



TOGETHER
@ WORK™

PROTECTING FRESH WATER

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WATER GUIDE



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Fresh water is critical to our survival and that of the world's diverse animal and fish species.

Without water, we can't produce the food we eat, the clothes we wear, and the energy we depend upon each day. Less than 1% of the world's water is drinkable and accessible and it is increasingly threatened by climate change, population growth, and pollution.

Today, roughly one in three people lack access to safe drinking water. ***By 2025, two thirds of the world's population may be facing water shortages.***

Knowing where your water comes from is the beginning. Here's a hint: it doesn't come from the tap. Your water actually comes from cloud forests, mountains or lakes, or underground aquifers.

Most of us don't stop to think about how water flows through our day-to-day lives. Water grows the cotton used to make our pajamas and our sheets. It is not only the critical ingredient to our morning coffee, but it also irrigates the coffee beans. Plus, it keeps us clean, sustains us, and is ingrained into every part of our lives.

WE ALL USE AND IMPACT WATER

Water is essential to all life. Plants, humans, and wildlife alike rely on clean, abundant sources of freshwater to drink; freshwater ecosystems provide habitats and fisheries; and flowing waters nourish agricultural fields, downstream deltas, and floodplains.

Water is the ultimate shared resource. Everyone within a community shares the same water source and affects the very same water source. And eventually our wastewater all goes to the same place, too. We all have a responsibility to protect this shared resource, and here are easy steps you can take to become a guardian of this precious resource.

- **Identify your local watershed.** Every one of us lives in an area where water drains into a common waterway, such as a stream, lake, wetland, or even the ocean. This area is the watershed and it impacts your local water, and all the individuals, businesses, and agricultural lands in the area contribute to the health of your watershed.

Most watersheds have recreational activities and volunteer opportunities through local organizations or schools. There are many ways to enjoy, explore, and help your watershed and local community!

Click here to find your local watershed.

We All Have a Water Footprint



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- **Understand your water footprint.** Each of us has a water footprint, directly linked to our daily activities as well as the water used in the production of food, clothing, and other products we use each day.

Many of the goods we purchase are not produced locally, and impact communities that are often far away and may lack access to freshwater. High consumer demand of certain goods can inadvertently contribute to illness, pollution, and hunger in these communities so, it's important to understand the environmental impact of your purchasing decisions.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Diseases caused by unsafe water kill more people every year than all forms of violence, including war.
- An 8 oz. cup of coffee requires 36.9 gallons of water to make.
- Agriculture - including growing coffee - uses 70% of freshwater globally.

[Click here to learn more and calculate your water footprint.](#)

BECOMING A WATER GUARDIAN IS EASY

Try doing one new thing every week to manage your water usage at home.



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TURN OFF THE TAP

when brushing your teeth or shaving.

AVOID

beauty products with micro beads or harsh chemicals that will feed into the ground and your water supply.

SCRAPE, RATHER THAN RINSE

dishes before loading them into the dishwasher, and only run the dishwasher when it's full.

WASH

only full loads of laundry.

WATCH

what you put down the drain or flush! These contaminants lead back into your local water system.



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LANDSCAPE FOR YOUR WATERSHED BY COLLECTING RAINWATER

to water your garden, and water only during the coolest parts of the day. Direct downspouts and gutters towards shrubbery or a bucket that can be used for watering and be sure to plant non-invasive species to guard your local watershed.



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BUY

High-efficiency plumbing, fixtures, and appliances. If you can't change the taps, look for leaks to fix as a way of improving your system.

MAINTAIN

your car properly. Oil and fluid leaks contribute to the urban runoff that can pollute our watersheds.



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ASK

the landscaping team to plant only native vegetation – local plants thrive most easily in their native environment and will require less water.

TRY DOING ONE THING AT WORK

Talk with your building facilities team about small changes that can have a big impact.



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EXPLORE BUILDING

a rain garden on corporate grounds to minimize runoff that can pollute the watershed.

IN THE KITCHEN

Avoid using bottled water, and instead provide filtered water dispensers in your shared kitchen areas. Use pitchers for your meetings and go plastic-free. Consider a next step and explore the ability to install water purification systems.



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OPPORTUNITY

to install water-efficient plumbing fixtures in the kitchen and bathrooms.

Working Together With Communities



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From a river's source, it winds its way through rural communities, densely populated cities, business parks, and farmlands before reaching the ocean. WWF's holistic approach addresses the various contributors to a river's health by partnering with governments, businesses, international financial institutions, and communities to ensure flowing, sustainable water for all. Because many businesses have a global footprint, WWF's corporate water stewardship program can help a company assess its water risk and implement better water practices. Working in key river basins around the world, WWF supports responsible water use and infrastructure, and implements innovative solutions.

[Click here to learn more about WWF's water initiatives.](#)

OTHER WAYS TO HELP

JOIN

Join the Green Team at the office or start one if it doesn't already exist. Working together with your colleagues, you can more easily innovate new ideas and implement changes that will greatly reduce your company's water footprint.

DONATE

Symbolically adopt freshwater species and WWF will use your donation where it is most urgently needed for our global conservation efforts.

Click on the link below to learn more.

River Otter

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