At South East Water, our priority is to provide you with clean, healthy water. We monitor the water from the time it leaves our protected catchments until it reaches our customers. South East Water supply water 24 hours a day to over 1.5 million customers.

Water is our most valuable resource and we need to use it wisely. It keeps us alive and it’s also essential for all life forms on earth, including animals and plants.

So, why do we need water and how can we avoid wasting it?

1. The human body

We all need different amounts of water; the amount depends on a variety of factors such as temperature and exercise. Our bodies continuously lose water through perspiration (sweat) and going to the toilet. This water needs to be replaced so that our bodies can function properly.

The human body is made up of roughly 60–70% water. Your brain is approximately 80% water, your bones 25% and blood around 85% water.

Apart from keeping us refreshed, your body needs water to perform a variety of tasks. Water helps the body to:

- control temperature (through perspiration)
- move food through the intestinal tract and remove waste
- prevent the build-up of salt
- digest food and regulate metabolism
- carry oxygen to the blood
- clean your blood.

People can survive for about one month without food, but only one week without water.

2. Quick facts

1. The average person needs around eight glasses of water each day.
2. The scientific name for water is H₂O.
3. Pure, clean water has no colour (it’s transparent) and has no smell.
4. Around 30% of water used at home is in the shower.
3. Activity

Living things are all part of the water cycle; they take water in (absorb) and give water out (expire). Our bodies are made up of around 70% water, so it's no surprise that much of the food we eat is also largely made up of water.

**Did you know?** A watermelon is made up of approximately 93% water, a carrot 88%, an apple 85%, a fish 67% and a frog 88%.

**Activity** Find out how much water is contained in fruit and vegetables. You will need:
- whole fruits and vegetables
  (small varieties such as an apple or peach are best)
- a tray
- scales
- oven (optional)

**What to do:**
- Estimate the percentage of water contained in the selected fruit and vegetables.
- Weigh the fruit and vegetables.
- Place fruit and vegetables on a tray and leave it in the sun to dry for one to two weeks (an oven can be used for faster results, but make sure an adult helps you).
- Weigh fruit and vegetables when dry
- Estimate the approximate percentage of water for each of the fruit and vegetables based on the remaining weight.

**Worksheet table**
- Type of fruit or vegetable
- Original weight
- Weight after drying
- Approximate percentage of water

**Observe and record**
- What happened to each item?
- Calculate the percentage of water lost.

4. Using water wisely

Now that we know how valuable water is, we can look at some of the ways you can use water wisely at your school and home:

1. Save water from drinking taps. Place ice cream containers under the water fountains/bubblers and pour excess water on the garden.
2. Turn taps off after washing hands and while brushing your teeth.
3. Use the half flush when you can (a half flush uses 4.5 litres verses a full flush which uses 9 litres on average).
4. Check for drips and leaks. Get someone to fix leaking taps, bubblers or toilets as soon as possible.
5. Keep your eyes open for signs of underground leaks, like a patch of grass that is growing better than the rest, or a wet spot on your concrete. Be sure to let a teacher, parent or adult know.
6. Catch rain water. Place containers outside when it rains or install rainwater tanks. Use the rainwater to flush your toilets or water your garden.
7. Wash paint brushes in a bucket or ice cream container instead of under a running tap.
8. Use a water bottle and keep refilling it rather than using the bubbler taps. At the end of the day, any leftover water can be poured on the garden.

**Did you know?**
For every litre of water you drink from the bubbler taps, four litres of water goes down the drain. What a waste!

5. Did you know?

Water is found in ice form on the Moon, as well as on Mars, Mercury and Neptune.

6. Want to know more?

For other fact sheets or further information, please visit southeastwater.com.au