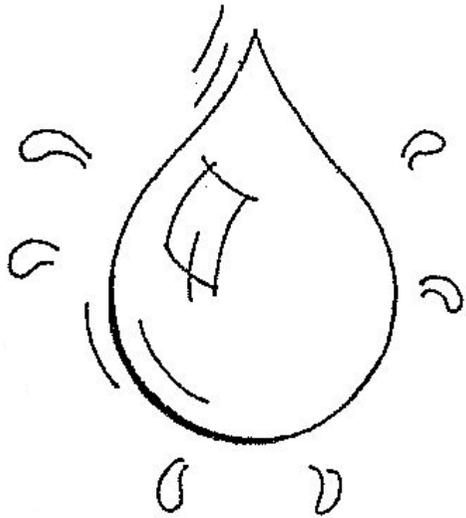


Change Choices Good, Better, Best

Water in our school



Stepping Up to Sustainability

Stepping Up to Sustainability – how can we live more sustainably and make positive lifestyle choices?

In 2011, WESSA launched the 'Stepping Up to Sustainability' concept. With the support of various partners, USAID and other funders, eleven 'Sustainability Commons' have been established across South Africa.

Each of these 'Sustainability Commons' will practice sustainable living by:

- reducing, sorting and managing waste better,
- installing renewable technologies,
- conserving and teaching about water management, as well as,
- providing experiential courses on biodiversity.

The goal is simple - to put into practice the lifestyle choices we all need to make! These innovative concepts are set to expand as we all 'step up to sustainability' and seek to change our environmental footprints into environmental handprints of practice for a more sustainable future!



Water

One of our most precious resources

Fresh water is essential for the daily lives of all aquatic and terrestrial organisms, including people. Although water can be a recyclable resource, it needs careful management and protection because of its vulnerability to over-exploitation and pollution. This is particularly true in South Africa where we are a water-stressed, bordering on water-scarce, country with water availability of only 1100m³/person/annum.

South Africa's average rainfall is about 450 millimetres (mm) per year - this is half the world average of 860 mm per year. The geographical distribution of rainfall, and subsequent availability of water supply, is highly variable, with the eastern and southern parts of the country receiving significantly more rain than the northern and western parts.



Did you know?

Reducing the amount of water needed for each toilet flush, by one litre can save hundreds of litres of water per day.

Did you know?

Having a long shower of 35 to 40 minutes uses more water than taking a bath!

Did you know?

Watering the garden for 15 minutes uses 50 litres of water.

Did you know?

Dual flush toilets save an average of 26% more water than a single flush 6 litre toilet.

Good Change Choices

Water



Report leaks. A dripping tap can waste between 30 and 60 litres of water each day.



Reduce toilet water usage. Adding a filled 2 litre soda bottle into the toilet cistern to displace water reduces water usage during flushing.



Install a bin. Throw sanitary products and other waste in the bin, not in the toilet.



Bring a water bottle to school. Bringing your own water bottles to school can help reduce water wastage. Drinking from a running tap often wastes a lot of water.



Reduce water usage. When washing your hands, don't let the water run while soaping up your hands.



Use a shower timer. Time how long you take to shower. If everyone in a family of four took one minute less to shower, your family could save 12 000 litres of water a year!



Save the cold water that comes through before a tap runs hot, and use it to water plants.

Did you know?

South Africa has a National Water Bill that attempts to ensure an equitable and sustainable water supply.

Did you know?

A dripping tap can waste between 30 and 60 litres of water each day.

Better Change Choices

Water



Replace showers with 'water-saving' shower heads. Fit low-pressure shower heads to reduce the amount of water forced out of the shower per minute.



Audit your school's water use. A comprehensive water audit of your school on a weekly or monthly basis will give you a good idea of where water is being used in your school. You can then plan ways of reducing unnecessary water usage in the school.



Re-look at how the school grounds are watered. Most evaporation happens on windy days and also at noon.

Consider not watering school grounds on windy days and consider water during cooler parts of the day, like in the morning and late afternoons.



Fit aerator or spray ends to sink taps. An aerator mixes air with water and can reduce water consumption by up to 50%.

Did you know?

According to the United Nations, every person needs 20-50 litres of safe freshwater a day to ensure their basic needs for drinking, cooking and cleaning. More than one in six people worldwide (894 million) do not have access to this amount of safe freshwater.

Best Change Choices

Water



Use "captured" water. Linking "Jojo" tanks to the gutter system will help gain extra water from rain for watering gardens and other outside needs.



Plant indigenous. Indigenous plants are best suited to your school grounds and require little if any maintenance and water. The more water-wise your school grounds are, the easier and cheaper it is to keep them beautiful.



Upgrade school toilets to 'double' flush systems. Upgrading toilets to dual flush toilets reduces water usage dramatically, using minimum amounts of water for fluids and maximum for solids, thus saving water on the 'fluid' flushes.



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For **environmental resources** to support better lifestyle choices, contact WESSA Share-Net, 033-330 3931 ext 2124 or 2144; e-mail us at sharenet@wessa.co.za or visit our website www.wessa.org.za

Main funding agent of the WESSA 'Stepping Up to Sustainability' project.

Practice the
lifestyle choices
we all have to make!!