



Dee Valley
WATER

a guide
to using water
efficiently in
your business

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Why should we save water?

We tend to take water for granted because we think that we live in a relatively wet country. With changing lifestyles, increased population growth and climate change to consider it's important that we all do our bit to use water wisely. Using water wisely doesn't mean being unhygienic it just means being careful. Being water efficient is not about using less water it's about wasting less.

What is Dee Valley Water doing?

Dee Valley Water uses the latest technology to minimise abstraction by reducing leakage from the supply system. This includes installing leakage monitoring devices and pressure controls and providing our customers with assistance to repair their supply pipes.

If you see a leak anywhere in our area of supply, please contact us on Freephone 0800 298 7112 so that we can arrange for the leaking pipe to be repaired.

What can you do?

This pack offers easy to follow advice for reducing water use within a typical business. The typical water consumption in the UK is around 4.0m³ per full-time employee per year. By following this audit and implementing the recommendations we are confident your business could lower its water consumption significantly.

This information pack is designed to help you identify water wastage and to record actions. Section 1 provides an example of simple steps that should help businesses towards better water management. Section 2 provides guidance on carrying out a self-audit.

If you have any difficulties with the audit do please contact us. We hope you take this opportunity to complete a water audit of your business. By reducing wastage not only will this save you money but it will also have a benefit on the environment.



Section 1 – Improved water management

To make it a success, appoint a senior person to take responsibility for the management of water. Continuity is vital, as without constant monitoring and maintenance any improvements are likely to deteriorate and the savings lost.

Carry out a simple water audit

The first step in reducing water use is to monitor consumption. Look at your water bills to assess how much water you use. For offices divide your annual water use by the number of full-time employees to get your consumption per person per year. If annual water use is greater than about 4.0 m³/person then there might be scope for improvements.

If possible look out for trends in the water use, as increasing consumption can indicate leaks or dripping taps.

It is worth remembering that the water you use is also reflected in your sewerage bills. Therefore reducing your water use will also cut your sewerage bill.

The audit guide in Section 2 will help you to review your water use and see where improvements can be made.

Set targets for improvements

Once leaks have been fixed and any other improvements have been made try setting targets for water use. Setting targets are important as it highlights problems such as leaks or faulty equipment and helps to see where you stand.

Large sites and factories using process water should consider fitting low-cost sub-meters in different areas to identify where water is used. Simple investigations can prove surprising and assumptions about where most water is used are often proved wrong by simple calculations.

Achieve your targets

Technological advances mean that new water efficiency products are entering the market place everyday. For details of suppliers and manufacturers of water efficiency products the Water Technology List (www.eca-water.gov.uk) includes a continually updated list of approved water efficient products such as WCs, urinal controllers, taps, flow regulators and leakage detection and monitoring.

Routine monitoring and review of usage

In order for the savings to be sustained it makes sense to carry out regular monitoring of water usage and water efficient products. New technology might mean that lower targets could be set at a reasonable cost.



Section 2: Water Audit checklist

Check for underground pipe leaks

- Locate your meter(s) and internal stop tap(s)

The meter is normally located in the footpath but if you have any difficulties locating it please contact us.

Action / Comments

- During a period of no water use in the business, check the meter index and pointer. If it is moving – you have a leak.

Action / Comments

- If the meter index is moving, during a period of no water use, close the internal stoptap(s) on your incoming supply. If the index stops, you have an internal leak; if not there is probably a leak on the underground supply pipe, which runs between your meter (if it is located outside) and your internal stoptap. Dee Valley Water provide a subsidised leak detection service. Please contact us for details.

Action / Comments

- Arrange for any necessary repairs (contact us if you need advice) and then check the meter again to be sure that all the repairs have been effective.

Meter reading / accounts records

- Do you compare your water account with previous periods to check for abnormal water consumption? It is advisable to do so as an increasing consumption may indicate a leak.

Action / Comments

- Do you read your meter regularly? Regular readings over a period can quickly show a trend which may indicate the presence of a leak.

Action / Comments

Assessing plumbing appliances / fittings for water efficiency

The Water Technology List is a Government initiative aimed at businesses that can benefit from tax relief. Visit www.eca-water.gov.uk for more details.

- Are the urinals fitted with water efficient controls? Automatic flushing of urinals when they have not been used is one of the largest wastes of water and one of the cheapest to stop. Fitting controllers such as passive infra-red devices can save upto 60% of the total water use. If controllers are fitted it is important to check that they are operating correctly and that the water use is as specified in the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulation 1999.

Action / Comments

- Are the WC cisterns operating efficiently? Check the level in the cistern is correctly adjusted. Try fitting cistern displacement devices, such as Save-a-flush bags, free from Dee Valley Water to all our customers on request.

- If the washrooms are due for refurbishment, consider replacing toilets and showers with water efficient appliances. The Water Technology List provides details of approved appliances.

Action / Comments

- Are all taps drip free? Dripping taps can waste large volumes of water. Renewing the washers usually solves the problem and if carried out immediately the drip is noticed saves water and money.

Action / Comments

- Do employees sometimes leave taps running? You can retro-fit self closing taps, which can adjusted to required duration, to prevent waste. Many models have in-built flow restrictors that can further reduce waste. A flow of 6l/min is generally sufficient.

Action / Comments

- Are plugs fitted in the basins? Replace plugs where missing or defective unless the basin is fitted with spray taps. Captive plugs encourage users to fill the basin, rather than use running water, and are difficult to vandalise.

Action / Comments

- Are showers provided with push button controls? Proximity sensors or time mechanisms help reduce waste. Low flow showerheads reduce the flow to below 9 l/min helping to make further savings.

Action / Comments

Internal pipework

- Are the pipe runs unnecessarily long? Long pipe runs to hot water taps or showers allow heated water to cool and this is often run to waste as users wait for hot water to come through. To save water and energy consider rationalising the pipework or installing point-of-use heaters.
- Are the pipes lagged efficiently to prevent bursts and heat loss?

Action / Comments

Grounds / Gardens

- Is there a water use associated with garden/grounds maintenance? Water butts provide a cheap way to collect and use rainwater which is better for plants than tap water. Mulches help to reduce water loss and keep the weeds at bay. For landscaped areas use plants that are drought resistant and sun-loving. For more information on garden efficient planting visit the Royal Horticultural Society website at www.rhs.org.uk.

Action / Comments

- Are damp patches visible in the grounds? Unusual damp patches can indicate an underground leak. Dee Valley Water provides help with leak detection. If you need our assistance please contact us.

Action / Comments

Catering facilities

- Do you have a canteen/kitchen? When replacing appliances choose water efficient models. Visit www.waterwise.org.uk or other trade association web-sites for details of the most efficient models.

Action / Comments

Good housekeeping

- Are staff aware of the need to conserve water? Try to encourage all members of the business to save water both at work and home:
 - Set targets for unit consumption and review periodically.
 - Appoint a water efficiency champion.
 - Use posters and regular meetings to keep the message fresh.
 - Get staff involved in generating water saving ideas.

Action / Comments