Lesson 9

Student Action Projects

Introduction

Our per capita water usage (the amount of water per person per day) in the Columbia Basin is among the highest on the planet. Despite the fact that we appear to have abundant fresh water, especially when compared to other regions of the planet, we now know that Climate Change threatens the dependability of our local water supplies, and that finding and treating water to make it safe for human consumption, and treating our sewage and effluent after we are finished are both expensive and energy intensive.

With nearly 8 billion of us on this little planet, we all need to do our part to conserve and protect our precious water resources, and the best way to start is to figure out just how much we use in the first place. From there we can make a plan to use less, and be smarter about this shared resource that everyone, and everything in the Columbia Basin relies on.

The Home Water Conservation Challenge is a great way to estimate your daily water use for yourself and your household. It is also a great planning tool to set goals for water conservation!

Time: 30 mins

Materials: Note pad, online water use calculator.

Instructions

• Fill out the **online water use calculator** to see what your household, and per capita (per person) daily water use is. Note this is a US site, and you will need to multiply the GALLONS by 3.79 to get the metric Litre volume measurement.

• Is your per capita water use higher or lower than the BC average? Higher or lower than the Canadian average?

• What are some areas that you might easily decrease your per capita water use? If you have trouble thinking of these areas, think about the water you use every day, like showering, brushing your teeth, and washing dishes.

• Set a goal to reduce your personal water use

using the ideas you thought of above. For example, you might want to try to reduce your showers to 5 minutes, or be sure to turn off the taps when you brush your teeth.

• Run the online water calculator with your planned water savings goals:

1. How much water will you save per day? Per week (daily savings x 7)? Per month (daily savings x 30)? Per year (daily savings x 365)?
2. How much will your household save per year if they all tried to conserve water (your annual water savings x the number of people in your household)?
3. How much water would your community save every year if everyone committed to the water saving ideas you came up with (your annual water savings x the population of your town)?

Summary

With nearly 8 billion of us on the planet, and nearly 170,000 people in the Columbia Basin Trust Region, every little thing we do for conservation really adds up. It all starts with you!

Extensions

If you have a leaky tap, you can easily calculate the water loss for that fixture using the City of Edmonton's utility (Epcor) Water Calculator.

Resources

Try these additional water use calculators for slightly different approaches to calculating water footprints:

- https://www.watercalculator.org/wfc2/q/household/
- https://www.home-water-works.org/calculator
- https://www.strathcona.ca/agriculture-environment/environment-and-conservation/water-conservation/water-calculator/results/AMM4Z0d1JJSFMv36aZA0/