

Clean Water Facts

Water

- » 884 million people lack access to safe water supplies; approximately one in eight people.
- » 3.575 million people die each year from water-related disease.
- » The water and sanitation crisis claims more lives through disease than any war claims through guns.
- » An American taking a five-minute shower uses more water than a typical person in a developing country slum uses in a whole day.

Sanitation

- » Only 62% of the world's population has access to improved sanitation – defined as a sanitation facility that ensures hygienic separation of human excreta from human contact
- » Lack of sanitation is the world's biggest cause of infection.
- » 2.5 billion people lack access to improved sanitation, including 1.2 billion people who have no facilities at all.
- » More people in the world have cell phones than access to a toilet.

Children

- » Diarrhea remains in the second leading cause of death among children under five globally. Nearly one in five child deaths – about 1.5 million each year – is due to diarrhea. It kills more young children than AIDS, malaria and measles combined.
- » Every 20 seconds, a child dies from a water-related disease.
- » Diarrhea is more prevalent in the developing world due, in large part, to the lack of safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, as well as poorer overall health and nutritional status.
- » Children in poor environments often carry 1,000 parasitic worms in their bodies at any time.
- » In the developing world, 24,000 children under the age of five die every day from preventable causes like diarrhea contracted from unclean water.
- » 1.4 million children die as a result of diarrhea each year.

Women

- » In just one day, more than 200 million hours of women's time is consumed for the most basic of human needs – collecting water for domestic use.
- » Millions of women and children spend several hours a day collecting water from distant,

often polluted sources.

- » A study by the International Water and Sanitation Centre (IRC) of community water and sanitation projects in 88 communities found that projects designed and run with the full participation of women are more sustainable and effective than those that do not. This supports an earlier World Bank study that found that women's participation was strongly associated with water and sanitation project effectiveness.

Disease

- » At any given time, half of the world's hospital beds are occupied by patients suffering from diseases associated with lack of access to safe drinking water, inadequate sanitation and poor hygiene.
- » The majority of the illness in the world is caused by fecal matter.
- » Someone dies of a water-related illness every 14 seconds.
- » Approximately one-third of deaths in the developing world are caused by contaminated water.
- » Almost one-tenth of the global disease burden could be prevented by improving water supply, sanitation, hygiene and management of water resources. Such improvements reduce child mortality and improve health and nutritional status in a sustainable way.
- » 88% of cases of diarrhea worldwide are attributable to unsafe water, inadequate sanitation or insufficient hygiene.
- » 90% of all deaths caused by diarrheal diseases are children under 5 years of age, mostly in developing countries.
- » It is estimated that improved sanitation facilities could reduce diarrhea-related deaths in young children by more than one-third. If hygiene promotion is added, such as teaching proper hand washing, deaths could be reduced by two thirds. It would also help accelerate economic and social development in countries where sanitation is a major cause of lost work and school days because of illness.

Economics

- » Over 50 percent of all water projects fail and less than five percent of projects are visited, and far less than one percent have any longer-term monitoring.
- » Investment in safe drinking water and sanitation contributes to economic growth. For each \$1 invested, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates returns of \$3 – \$34, depending on the region and technology.
- » Almost two in every three people who need safe drinking water survive on less than \$2 a day and one in three on less than \$1 a day.
- » Households, not public agencies, often make the largest investment in basic sanitation, with the ratio of household to government investment typically 10 to 1.
- » Investment in drinking-water and sanitation would result in 272 million more school

attendance days a year. The value of deaths averted, based on discounted future earnings, would amount to \$3.6 billion a year.

- » Constructing a sanitary toilet only costs about \$30.

Environment

- » Less than 1% of the world's fresh water (or about 0.007% of all water on earth) is readily accessible for direct human use.
- » More than 80% of sewage in developing countries is discharged untreated, polluting rivers, lakes and coastal areas.
- » The UN estimates that by 2025, forty-eight nations, with combined population of 2.8 billion, will face freshwater "stress" or "scarcity".
- » Agriculture is the largest consumer of freshwater by far: about 70% of all freshwater withdrawals go to irrigated agriculture.
- » At home the average American uses between 100 and 175 gallons of water a day. That is less than 25 years ago, but it does not include the amount of water used to feed and clothe us.
- » Conserving water helps not only to preserve irreplaceable natural resources, but also to reduce the strain on urban wastewater management systems. Wastewater is costly to treat, and requires continuous investment to ensure that the water we return to our waterways is as clean as possible.

Bottled Water

- » According to the Pacifica Institute, it takes 3 liters of water to produce one liter of bottled water.
- » A one-liter brand-name bottle of water costs about \$1.50. That's about 3,000 times more expensive than an equal amount of municipal tap water. (friendsofwater.com)
- » 1.5 million barrels crude oil are used annually to produce the plastic used to bottle water. 90 percent of the cost of a bottle of water is for the label, cap and bottle. (friendsofwater.com)

Miscellaneous

- » Households without plumbing spend on average 90 minutes each day hauling water for family needs.
- » By 2025, two-thirds of the world's people will face water stress. The global demand for water will have grown by over 40 percent.
- » In the United States we seldom worry about the quality of our drinking water, but forty percent of our rivers and lakes are too polluted to be safe for fishing, swimming or supporting aquatic life. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, 218 million Americans live within ten miles of a polluted lake, stream or coastal area.