

Water Saving Taps

- Tap aerators can be added to conventional taps at any time after they have been installed. They deliver a lower flow of water without any reduction in pressure. Aerated flow taps are suited to activities performed in the kitchen e.g. dishwashing.
- Spray taps deliver 70% less water than ordinary and are useful for hand washing.

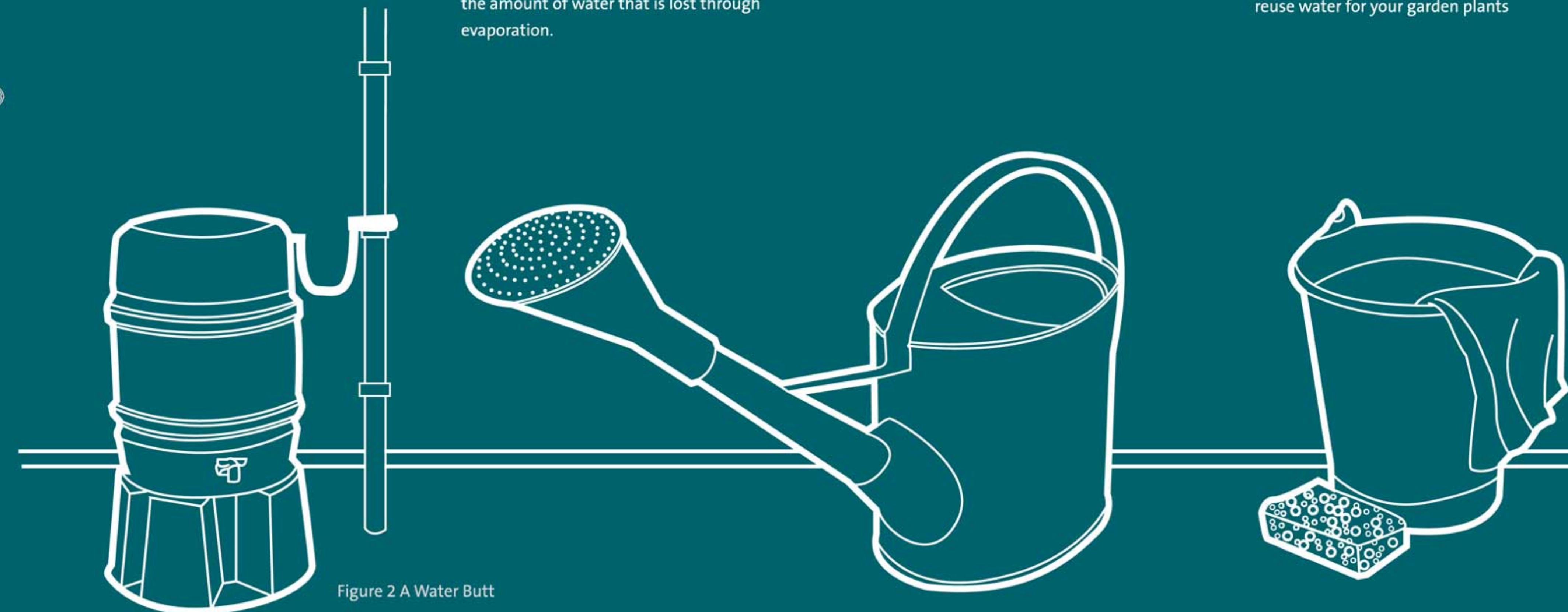


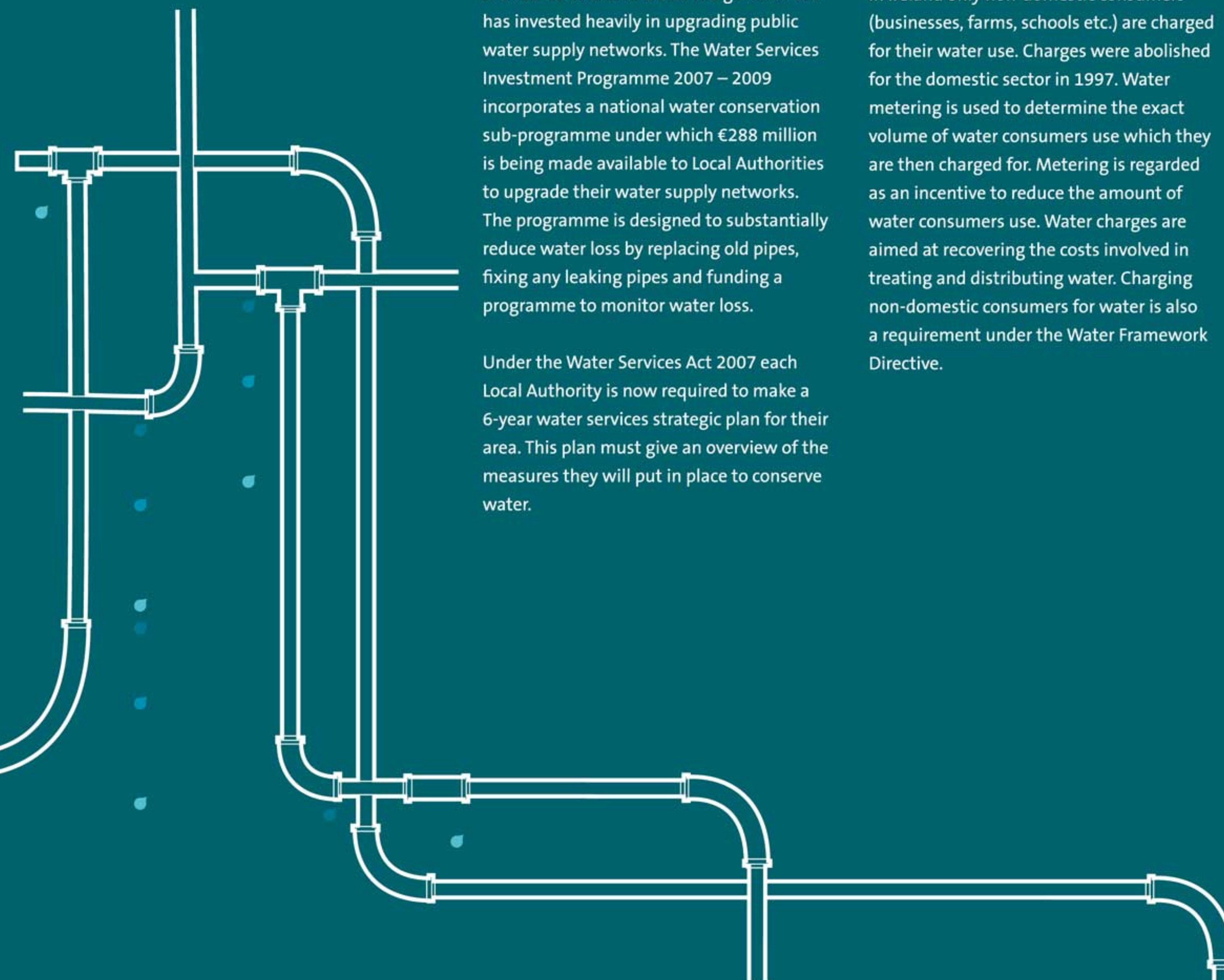
Figure 2 A Water Butt

In the Garden

- Install a rainwater harvesting system. This can consist of a water butt (figure 2) connected to your downpipe that collects rainwater from your roof. This water can then be used to water your garden or to wash your car.
- To water your garden use a watering can instead of a hosepipe.
- Water the garden plants early or late in the day when it is cooler, this reduces the amount of water that is lost through evaporation.
- Do not water lawns or wash cars when water is in short supply.
- Rather than washing your car using a hosepipe, use a bucket and sponge instead.
- Reduce the number of times you wash your car.
- Use a brush to clear your paths instead of a hosepipe.
- Watering the lawn is not always necessary. Grass can survive for long periods without water and will quickly recover when the next rain showers arrive.
- Raising the lawnmower blades to a higher level will help stop the grass from scorching in warm weather reducing the need to water your lawn.
- Use a basin in your sink to collect and reuse water for your garden plants

Leaking Water Mains

As a result of leaking underground pipes large quantities of water are lost before reaching the consumer. Due to the age of our water supply network many pipes are in a poor condition and are prone to bursts and leaks. It is estimated that up to 800 kilometres of Dublin's underground supply network is over 80 years old. Leakages are also occurring as a result of the increased pressure pipes are under as the demand for water rises. While a significant burst in a pipe causes immediate supply problems and tends to be reported and fixed early. It is the numerous smaller leaks which go undetected and cause the greatest water loss. Water conservation can be accomplished by repairing faulty pipes, replacing old sections of pipe and carrying out regular inspections for leaks along the network. It is the responsibility of the Local Authorities to fix any leaks in the public supply network. To help reduce water loss it is important that you report any leaks to your Local Authority.



In order to conserve water the government has invested heavily in upgrading public water supply networks. The Water Services Investment Programme 2007 – 2009 incorporates a national water conservation sub-programme under which €288 million is being made available to Local Authorities to upgrade their water supply networks. The programme is designed to substantially reduce water loss by replacing old pipes, fixing any leaking pipes and funding a programme to monitor water loss.

Under the Water Services Act 2007 each Local Authority is now required to make a 6-year water services strategic plan for their area. This plan must give an overview of the measures they will put in place to conserve water.

Water Charges

In Ireland only non-domestic consumers (businesses, farms, schools etc.) are charged for their water use. Charges were abolished for the domestic sector in 1997. Water metering is used to determine the exact volume of water consumers use which they are then charged for. Metering is regarded as an incentive to reduce the amount of water consumers use. Water charges are aimed at recovering the costs involved in treating and distributing water. Charging non-domestic consumers for water is also a requirement under the Water Framework Directive.

Further Information

If you want to know more about water conservation or what you can do to save water you can consult the following websites:

www.taptips.ie

www.slowtheflow.ie

www.dublin.ie/environment/water.htm

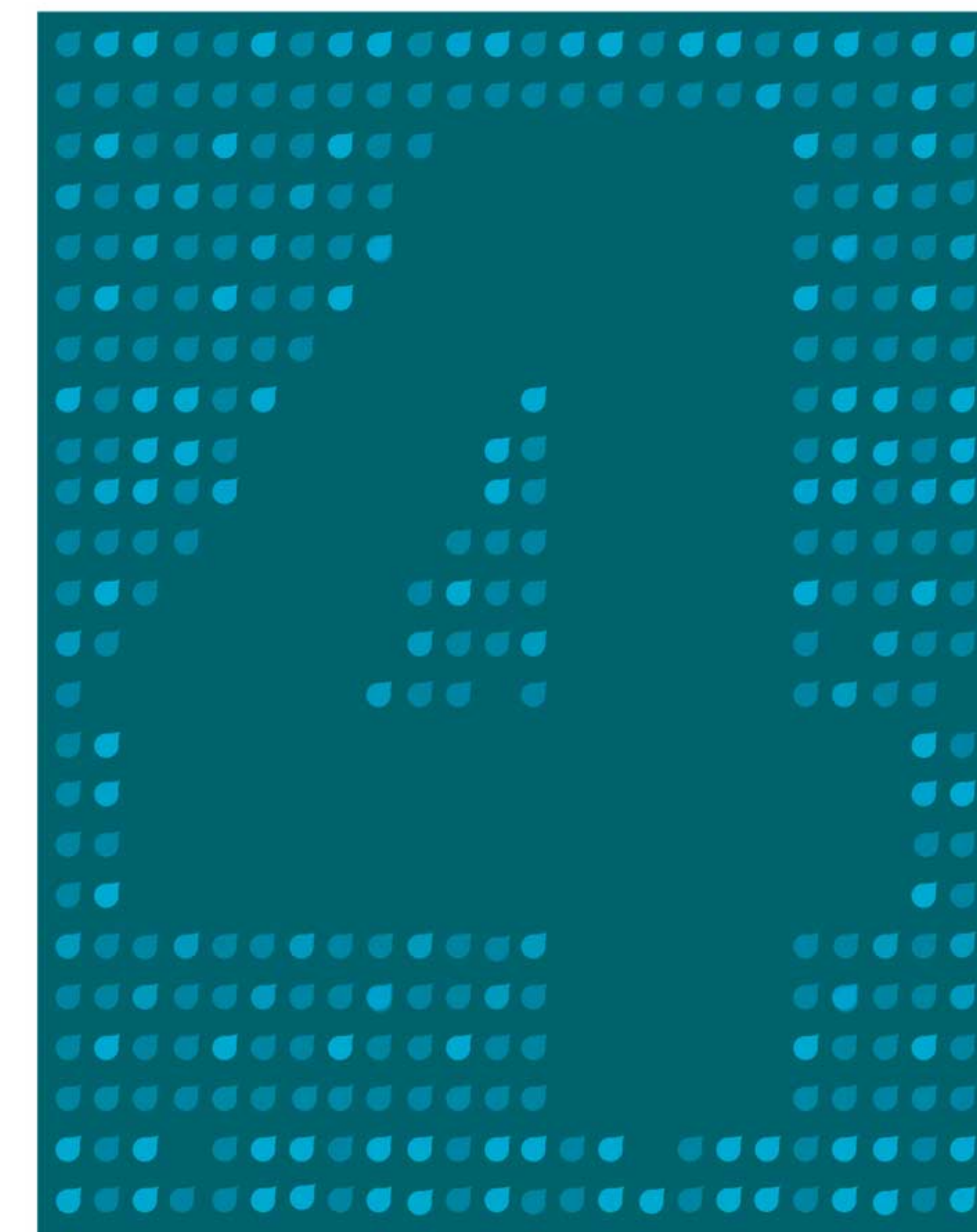
For information regarding water conservation in your area you should access your Local Authority's website. It should contain information about what to do if you wish to report a leak and also contains information about the efforts they are making to conserve water.

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Water Conservation

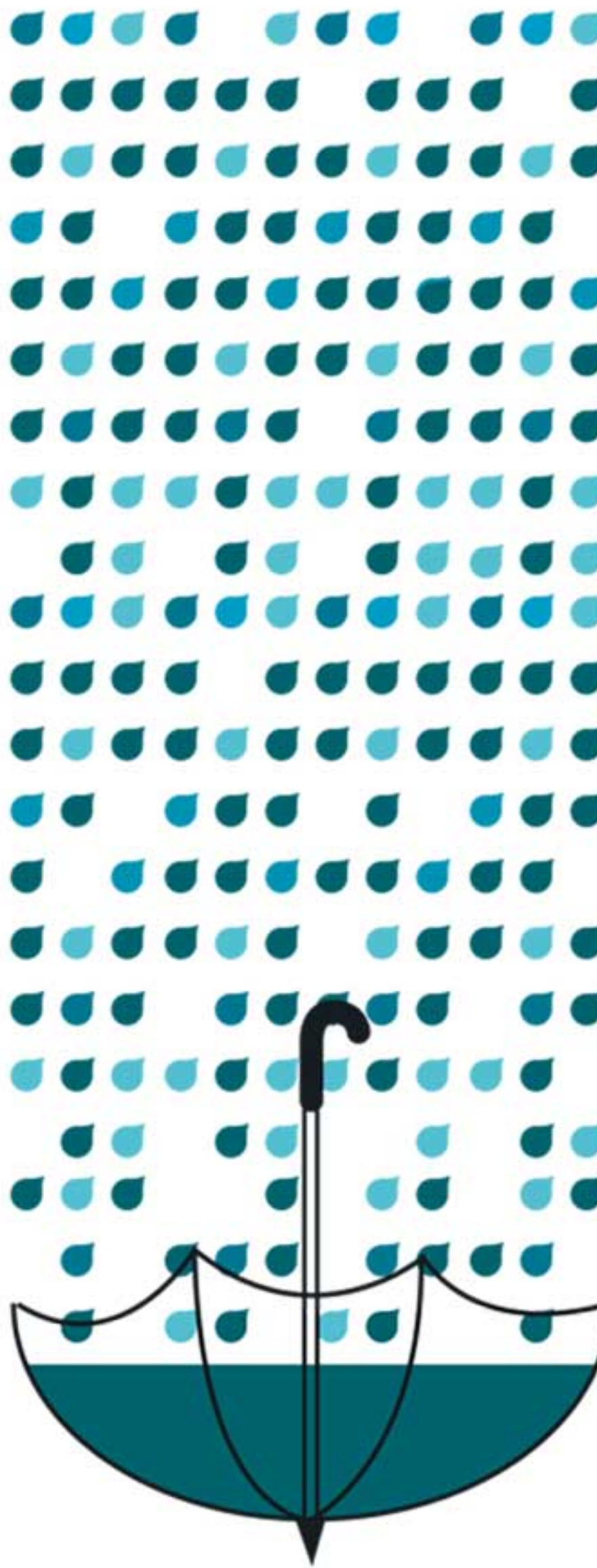




Introduction

Water is an extremely precious and scarce resource which needs to be managed carefully. In order to meet our demand for water without harming the environment, while preserving water resources so that they can meet the needs of future generations, it is essential that we use water sustainably. The aim of water conservation is to ensure the sustainable use of our water resources. Conservation means using only the amount of water we need and ensuring that what water we do take from the environment is used efficiently. Water conservation requires us to change our attitude towards water from one which views it as an unlimited and expendable resource to one which acknowledges its importance for us and for the natural environment.

To be effective, water conservation requires action by the government, local authorities, the industrial and agricultural sectors, householders and individuals. It is important that you play your part in a collective approach to conserving our water resources.



The Need for Water Conservation

Despite the natural abundance of water in Ireland water scarcity is set to become one of the most critical issues facing us. Population growth, the expansion of our urban areas and economic development have increased the demands on our resources. Some of us have experienced summers when water was in short supply and restrictions were placed on its use. In order to reduce the likelihood of such shortages occurring we must act to conserve water, especially in light of the impacts that climate change is anticipated to have and the demands that continued population growth will put on our water supplies. Conserving water helps to protect the natural environment as it reduces the amount of water which must be abstracted from our rivers, lakes and aquifers. The over-abstraction of water can cause rivers and lakes to dry up and has serious consequences for aquatic life. Over abstraction may also result in the loss of important natural habitats. Using less water reduces the quantity of potentially harmful wastewater we produce. Water conservation brings down the costs associated with treating, pumping, storing and distributing water and reduces the need to invest in upgrading existing treatment plants or building new ones.

Our Water Use

The activities we carry out on a daily basis consume huge quantities of water. Each person uses an average of 148 litres of water per day, of which less than 2% is consumed as drinking water. Much of the water we use flows down the drain without having been used for any beneficial purpose. Table 1 shows the average amount of water consumed per person, per day in Ireland. Table 2 shows the amount of water used by routine daily activities. The information regarding our water use is taken from www.taptips.ie.

Daily Water Use	Litres
Shower	35
Flushing the Toilet	27
Laundry Wash	40
Hand wash	12
Teeth Brushing	12
Dish wash	10
Cooking	10
Drinking	2
Total	148

Table 1. The Average Daily Water Consumption in Litres per person.

Activity	Litres Used
Bath	80
5 Minute Shower	35
Power Shower	125 litres in less than 5 minutes
Brushing Teeth with Tap running	6 litres per minute
Brushing Teeth with Tap off	1
Standard Flush Toilet	9
Modern Flush Toilet	6
Washing machine modern	45
Washing machine	65
Dishwasher	20
Washing car with Bucket	10
Hosepipe	9 litres per minute

Table 2. Water used by Routine Activities

What You Can Do?

There are a number of changes which you can make in your daily life and around your home to conserve water. Reducing, reusing and recycling water is the basis of water conservation.

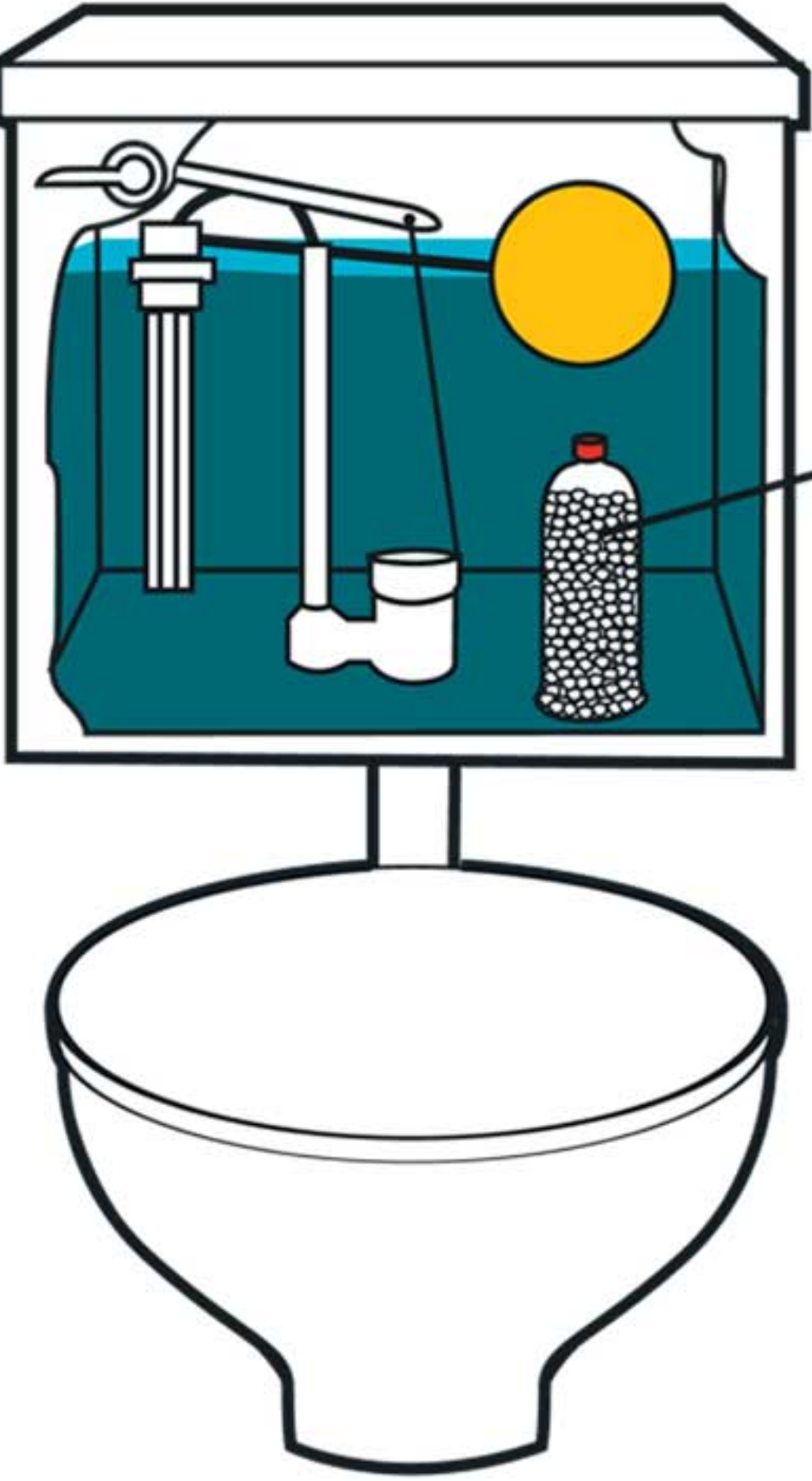


In the Kitchen

- Use your washing machine and dishwasher only when they are full.
- Before purchasing a new dishwasher or washing machine check their water efficiency rating.
- Rather than running the tap and waiting for cool water to flow store a jug or bottle of drinking water in the fridge.
- When washing dishes in the sink use a plug and do not let the water run.
- Use a basin to wash fruit and vegetables.

In the Bathroom

- As it uses less water take a shower rather than having a bath.
- Install a low flow shower head.
- The average toilet uses 6-9 litres of water per flush. Only flush when necessary.
- If installing a new toilet make sure it is a low flush toilet or that it is fitted with a dual flush system.
- In older toilets, to reduce the amount of water used with each flush, you can place a water saving device such as a rock filled container in the cistern (figure 1)
- Fix leaking pipes, taps and toilets. A leaking tap can waste up to 35 litres of water every day.
- Always use the plug in the basin when washing your hands or shaving.
- Recycle greywater for flushing toilets or for watering the garden. Greywater is the 'dirty' water from your bathroom sink, shower and washing machine. You can install a grey water recycling system in your home to allow you to collect grey water.
- Don't leave the tap running while brushing your teeth. A running tap wastes 6 litres of water per minute.
- Reduce the amount of time you spend in the shower.



Rock filled plastic container

Figure 1. Water Conservation Measure for Older Toilets