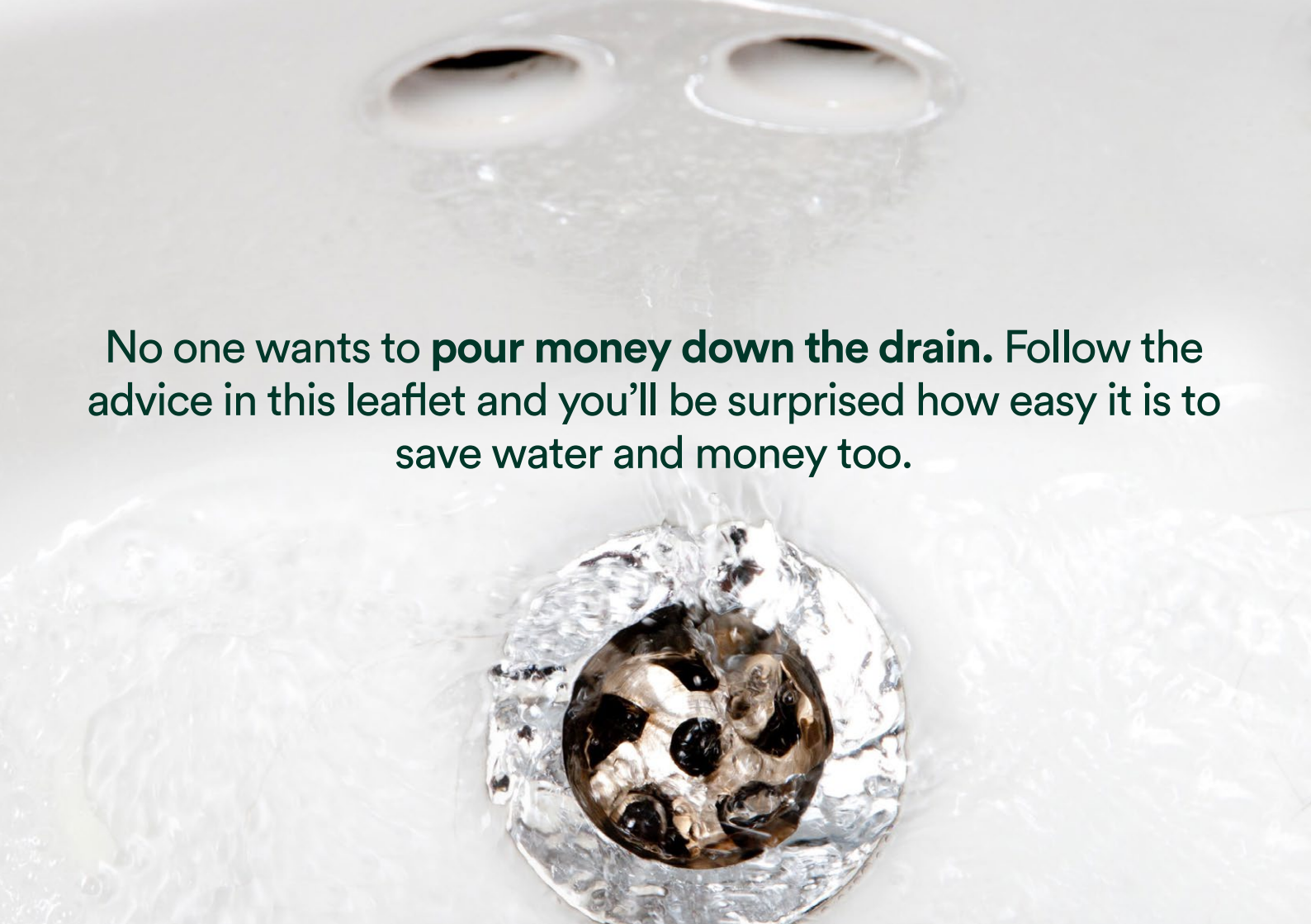


A guide to using
water wisely

Save water and money too



Water for the North West



No one wants to **pour money down the drain**. Follow the advice in this leaflet and you'll be surprised how easy it is to save water and money too.

Savings on tap

Saving water is not only good for the planet, it can be good for your bank balance too – no bad thing in these tough economic times.

A lot of water we use in the home is heated – such as baths, showers, washing machines and dishwashers. So making small changes to how you use water can help keep your energy bills down.

And, if you're one of our customers with a water meter, you'll already know that using less water also saves you money on your water bill too.

You can still use all the water you need, but with a few tweaks to your daily routine you could soon be feeling flush!

This leaflet offers some simple tips to help get you started. Enjoy!



**Wait a mo...
did you know?**

On average, each of us uses 142 litres of water every day. Imagine that lot on the doorstep!

The water that comes out of your tap has been collected, treated and transported to your home. The process requires lots of power, so by reducing your water usage, you'll help to reduce the North West's carbon footprint.

More than two thirds of household water is used in the bathroom with the kitchen and outdoor making up the rest.

How much water do you use?

Before we explain how easy it is to save water, you might find it useful to complete the table opposite to better understand how much water you currently use.

Each time you use water at home or in the garden, make a note of it in the table. At the end of the day, work out how much water you have used.

If you're using more than the average amount for the categories in the table, you will be able to make a reduction in your water consumption by following the advice in this booklet. And remember, if your water charges are based on a meter reading, then any reduction in your water use will have the added benefit of reducing your water bill too.

The average amount of water used in the home is approximately 142 litres per person per day



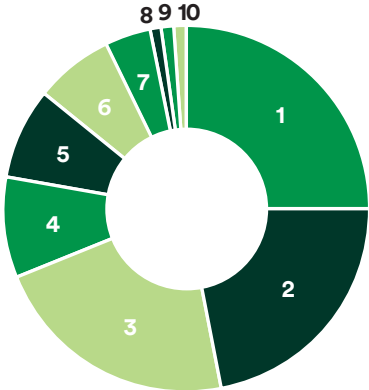
Your self-audit checklist

Activity	Average amount of water used (litres)	Multiply by	Number of times each day	Equals	Daily total
Bathroom					
Bath	80	x		=	
Power/mixer shower*	60	x		=	
Electric shower*	24	x		=	
Toilet flush	9	x		=	
Dual flush toilet	6	x		=	
Basin tap	6 per minute	x		=	
Kitchen					
Washing up bowl	8	x		=	
Washing machine (normal load)	50 litres per cycle	x		=	
Washing machine (eco load)	35 litres per cycle	x		=	
Dishwasher	14	x		=	
Kitchen taps	6 per minute	x		=	
Garden					
Watering can	10	x		=	
Hosepipe / sprinkler	Up to 1,000 per hour	x		=	
TOTAL FOR THE HOUSEHOLD PER DAY				=	

*Usage amounts based upon a 4 minute shower. All figures shown are a guide only, actual usage will depend on factors such as age of appliance and energy rating.

Average household water use

- 1: Shower **25%**
- 2: Toilet **22%**
- 3: Other (cold taps) **22%**
- 4: Washing machine **9%**
- 5: Bath **8%**
- 6: Bathroom hot tap **7%**
- 7: Hand wash dishes **4%**
- 8: Dishwasher **1%**
- 9: Car **1%**
- 10: Garden **1%**



Figures from the Energy Saving Trust

Cool savings in the kitchen

What better place to start thinking like a water hero than in the kitchen? These top tips could save you hundreds of litres of water each week, and a few quid into the bargain. Put the kettle on, and keep reading!

Put a plug in it!

When you're washing the dishes, try and get into the habit of placing a plug in the sink or using a bowl instead of letting the tap run. Also, modern dishwashers often use less water than washing by hand but please remember to only switch it on when it's full.

Show your mettle with your kettle

Get into the habit of filling the kettle only as full as you need. That way, you'll save water, and electricity. Anyone for a brew?

Load up, switch on

An average washing machine uses 50 litres of water. By waiting until you have a full load before pressing 'start', you'll save both energy and water.

If you're choosing a new machine, be sure to look for one that is energy and water efficient. This information is readily available for all new models. A bit of research could save you a packet in the long run.

Keep it chilled

Feeling thirsty? Why not keep a container of drinking water in the fridge? That way, you won't have to run the tap every time you want a cool drink.

Drip, drip, drip...

There's nothing more irritating than a dripping tap, especially as it can waste thousands of litres of water a year. Now where did you put that spare washer?

Put that running water to good use

If your hot water is supplied via a combi boiler you probably let your tap run for a few minutes before it gets hot. Don't let all that lovely water go to waste, collect it in a bowl or watering can and use it to water your houseplants or outside in the garden.

A woman with dark hair, wearing a bright green hoodie and dark jeans, is kneeling on a dark tiled floor in a kitchen. She is smiling and looking towards the camera while loading laundry into a black front-loading washing machine. The machine is built into light-colored wooden cabinetry. A grey laundry basket is on the floor next to the machine. In the background, a dark countertop holds a sink with a knife, a fork, and a knife. Two mugs are on the counter, one with the text 'I ❤️ NY'. A stainless steel trash can is visible in the background.

Wait until you have a full load before pressing 'start',
you'll save energy and water

Bill-busting in the bathroom

There are loads of ways to save water in the bathroom. Include a few of these in your daily routine and you could clean up!

Brushing up on your smile

Leaving the tap running when brushing your teeth can waste around 6 litres of water every minute. Remember: when you brush and floss, turn it off.

Showers vs baths

Electric showers typically use less than half as much water as a bath. So swapping a bath for a shower is the way to go if you want to save water.

If you've got a power or mixer shower, you may wish to consider having shorter showers as they use a lot more water than other types of shower.

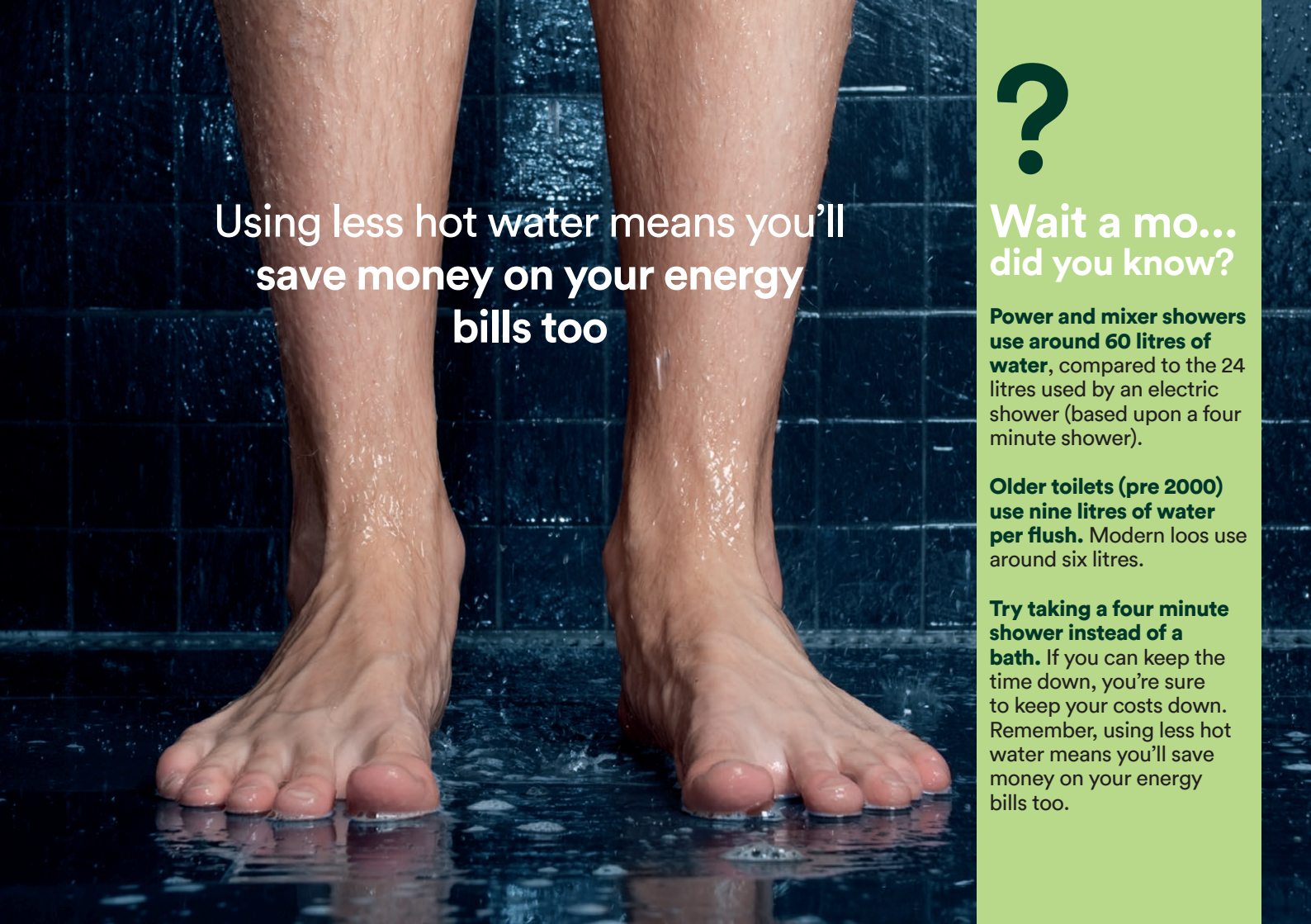
Visit unitedutilities.com/savewater for more water saving tips.

Feeling flushed with success

A third of the water we use each day goes straight down the toilet.

Modern loos with a low or dual flush can save you several litres every time you spend a penny. But if you have an older toilet, fitting a cistern bag device can also make a big difference.

And if you have to replace a faulty toilet cistern, consider fitting a dual flush version instead. They don't cost much more than a standard version and they're a great way to reduce the amount of water we flush away.



Using less hot water means you'll
save money on your energy
bills too

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Wait a mo...
did you know?

Power and mixer showers use around 60 litres of water, compared to the 24 litres used by an electric shower (based upon a four minute shower).

Older toilets (pre 2000) use nine litres of water per flush. Modern loos use around six litres.

Try taking a four minute shower instead of a bath. If you can keep the time down, you're sure to keep your costs down. Remember, using less hot water means you'll save money on your energy bills too.

Grow your garden, not your bill

Your garden can be a thirsty place. These tips will keep it looking blooming marvellous, without your bill growing skywards.

A can-do attitude

A watering can uses far less water than a hosepipe or sprinkler, and the smaller droplets are better for your plants.

Be sure to water your garden in the early morning or late evening, when you'll lose less through evaporation. Aim for the plant roots, not the leaves.

Mulching around

Mulching involves placing a protective cover over the soil to retain moisture and keep weeds at bay.

A layer of bark chips, cocoa shells, manure or peat free compost usually does the trick. You can even grow your vegetables through a layer of plastic sheeting.

Hanging basket brilliance

Here's a great homemade idea for your hanging baskets – in the grand tradition of Blue Peter.

Cut the bottom off a plastic bottle, and put a few small holes in the side. Place it in the hanging basket, upside down (with the cap still on). Simply fill this container every time you water your basket. It will spread the water more evenly and avoid spillages.

Choose the right plants

When you're at the garden centre, consider stocking up on drought resistant plants, such as geraniums. They look fabulous, and require a lot less water.

And don't forget to line any clay or terracotta pots with a plastic liner with holes in. It will help to retain moisture.

There's no butt about it

A water butt collects all that lovely rain that falls on your roof, so that you can give your plants a free drink.

Plants love rainwater, so there's no need to waste your tap water. They'll thank you for it, and in the long run, so will your bank balance.

You can order a water butt via our website unitedutilities.com/savewater



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**Wait a mo...
did you know?**

**The average UK roof
collects 85,000 litres of
water each year** – more
than enough to keep your
water butt topped up.

**A hosepipe or sprinkler
uses more water in one
hour than a family of four
will use in a day.** Ouch!

**Sprinklers and hosepipes
are not actually good for
lawns** as they encourage
shallow root growth.

**Put all that lovely
rainwater to good
use by installing
a water butt**

Save water, save energy, save money!

Saving water is good for the environment and your bank balance too. Being careful not to waste water will reduce your water bill (if you have a meter) and your energy bills too.

That's because around 12% of your gas and electricity bill pays to heat water for showers, cleaning, washing machines and dishwashers.



Follow our simple tips to save money on your energy bills!

Spend less time in the shower

Keeping your shower time to just 4 minutes can make a big difference to your energy bills.

Replace your showerhead

Replace your inefficient showerhead with a water efficient one to reduce your water use and lower your gas bills (not suitable for electric showers).

Careful with your washing

You can save money on your energy bill just by using your washing machine on a 30-degree cycle and reducing your washing machine use by one run per week for a year.

Fit a tap aerator

You could also save money by fitting an aerator onto your kitchen tap to reduce the amount of hot water coming out without affecting how it washes or rinses.

Fill up your dishwasher

Only run your dishwasher when it is full to reduce the amount of water and energy you use.

Swap your bath for a shower

Some of us might enjoy a long soak in the bath, but swapping just one bath a week with a 4-minute shower could save you money on your energy bills.

Use a bowl in your sink

A running tap uses enough water to make 24 brews per minute, so having a bowl in your kitchen sink for washing up will save hot water.

Just boil what you need

Kettles are one of the most used appliances but many of us boil the kettle with more water than we need. Avoid overfilling the kettle to make a saving.

Use it, don't lose it

Some leaks can be tricky to spot. They're often hidden from view – on a pipe behind a plastered wall, on a water tank tucked away in the attic, or even on an outside pipe under your garden.

Not only is this wasteful, but it could be damaging your home. And, if your bill is based on a water meter reading, you're literally pouring money down the drain.

That's because your water meter can't tell the difference between a leaky pipe and your everyday water usage – both will make the meter dial turn, and increase your bill. (And please don't ignore those leaking taps or cisterns overflowing into your toilet bowl either – both could be costing you lots of hard earned cash in wasted water.)

Thankfully, there is a simple way to check for leaks which doesn't require you to be a DIY expert!

If you do spot a leak and need a plumber to help get it sorted you can find one in your area by visiting **watersafe.org.uk**

You can find much more information on how to spot leaks, and the support we provide, at **unitedutilities.com/household-leaks**

How to check for leaks

STEP 1: Turn off all taps and appliances which use water.

STEP 2: Wait 30 minutes, then take a meter reading (including the red digits).

STEP 3: Don't use any water for a further hour (longer if possible, ideally overnight), then take another meter reading.

STEP 4: Compare the two readings. Have they changed? If so, you could have a leak.

Check your loo for leaks

Modern toilet cisterns tend to overflow into the bowl rather than through a pipe in the wall so can waste thousands of litres of water if they go undetected. You may hear a low hissing noise if the cistern is leaking water into the toilet – a simple way to spot this is to place a piece of dry toilet paper on the back of the bowl and see if it becomes wet. If it does, your cistern is probably leaking. Visit **unitedutilities.com/leakyloo** for further details.

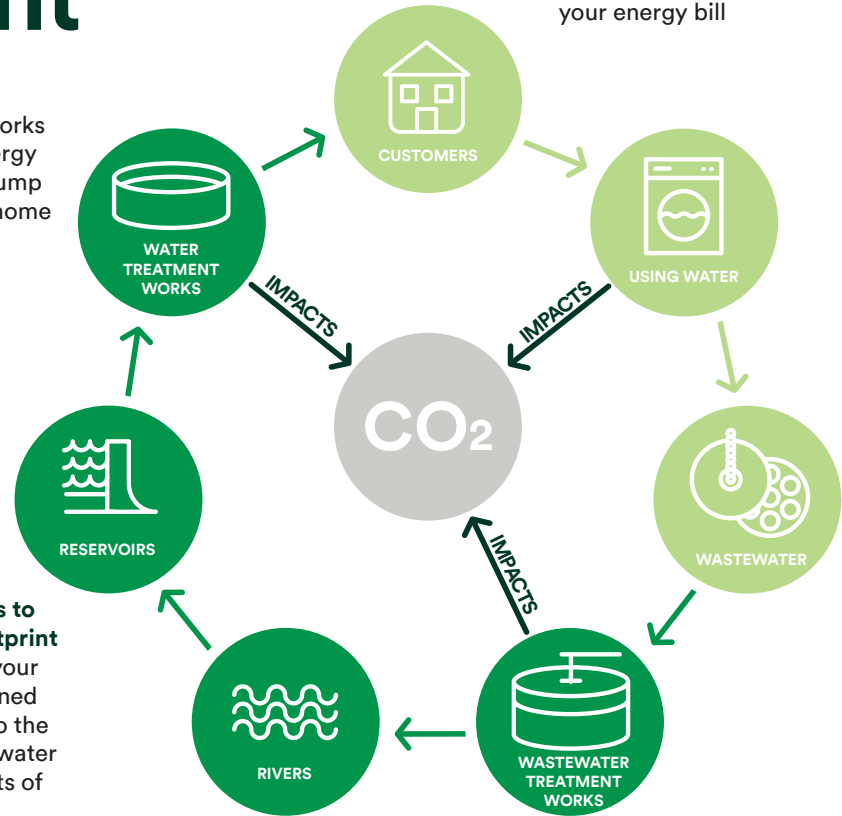
How water impacts the environment

This diagram illustrates how the demand for water directly affects the amount of carbon emissions from power stations. Collecting, cleaning and then pumping water to your home – and the energy required to take away and clean all the wastewater too – requires a lot of energy, so reducing your water use will have a positive impact on your carbon footprint.

Our water treatment works have to use lots of energy to collect, clean and pump drinking water to your home every day

Water efficiency helps to reduce OUR carbon footprint
The water that leaves your home needs to be cleaned before being returned to the environment. Our wastewater treatment works use lots of energy to do this

Water efficiency helps to reduce YOUR carbon footprint
Using water wisely in the home will reduce wastage and reduce your energy bill



Shrink your bill with a water meter

A water meter can be a great way of cutting your bill down to size.

Your charges would be based on the water you use, so the more water you save the more cash you save.

If you live on your own, have a small family or pay a high fixed bill, you could be quids in.

For the first two years we also offer a 'lowest bill guarantee'. This means we compare the amount of water you use against your fixed charges and bill you whichever is the lowest amount! You can't lose!

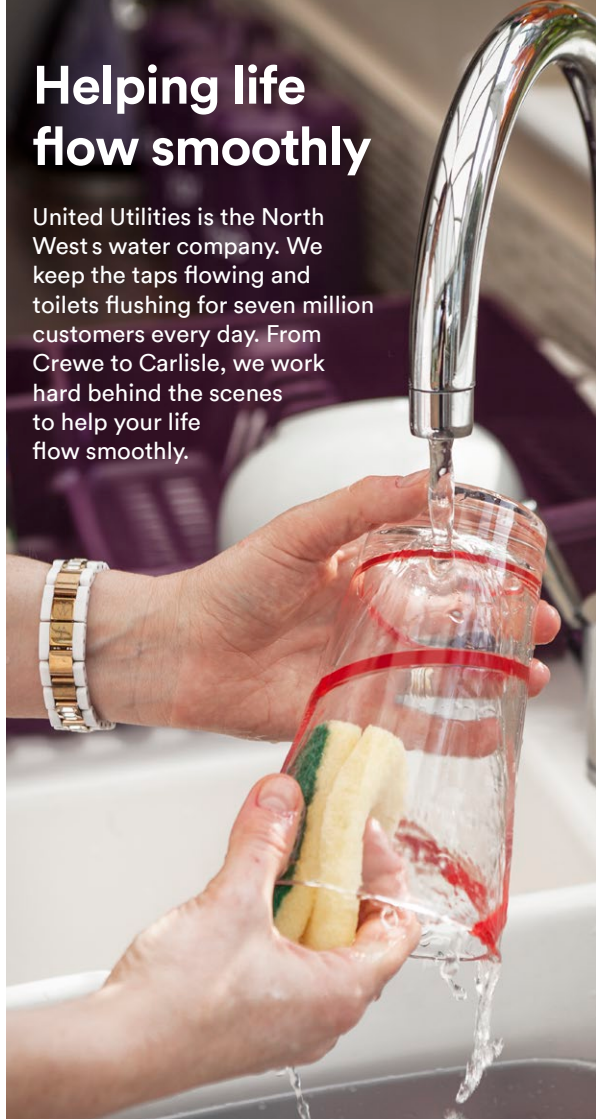
We install water meters free of charge, and applying for one couldn't be easier.

Call us on 0345 072 6065 and we'll arrange a convenient date to fit the meter so you can start saving on your bills!

Try it for two years... change back if you don't like it.

Helping life flow smoothly

United Utilities is the North West's water company. We keep the taps flowing and toilets flushing for seven million customers every day. From Crewe to Carlisle, we work hard behind the scenes to help your life flow smoothly.



Other leaflets that may be of interest:

- Support with your water bill
- Water meter application pack
- Testing your household water meter
- A guide to paying your water bill
- A guide to our Priority Services
- A summary of our household charges
- A guide to using water wisely
- Lead pipe replacement scheme
- Our standards of service

You can download any of our leaflets from our website: unitedutilities.com/leaflets, or write to: **United Utilities**, PO Box 459, Warrington WA55 1WB.

In case you need to contact us:



To talk to us about your bill:

0345 672 2888 if you don't have a water meter

0345 672 2999 if you have a water meter

For opening hours please visit unitedutilities.com/contactus where you can also get in touch with us online.

To report any problems with your water or wastewater services: 0345 672 3723

Opening hours: for emergencies we are open 24 hours.

You can also call this number to check the identity of one of our representatives.

If you have hearing or speech difficulties, and use a textphone, please dial **18001** followed by the number you require.



You can go online:

Visit our website and click on 'Live chat' to webchat with a member of our team or go to unitedutilities.com/contactus



Or write to us at:

United Utilities, PO Box 459, Warrington WA55 1WB



Translations

Choose your preferred language on our website by clicking on 'Accessibility help'.



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unitedutilities.com/myaccount