



KEY CANADIAN WATER FACTS AND FIGURES

Canada's Fresh Water Resources

- Canada holds 20% of the world's freshwater, but has only 9% of the world's renewable freshwater supply; the rest is 'fossil water', a legacy of the melting of large ice sheets that once covered much of Canada.
- Canada has about 9% of the world's renewable freshwater supply, compared with 18% for Brazil, 9% for China, and 8% for the United States.
- Approximately 60% of Canada's freshwater drains north, while 90% of its population lives within 300km of its southern border.
- Canada has more lake area than any other country in the world; Canada's rivers and lakes contain enough water to flood the entire country to a depth of more than two metres.
- The Great Lakes, straddling the Canada-United States border, constitute one of the largest systems of freshwater reservoirs on earth, with 18% of the world's fresh surface water.
- Between 1972 and 1991, Canada's withdrawal of freshwater resources increased from 24 billion cubic metres per year to over 45 billion cubic metres per year - a rise of 80%; in the same period, the population increased only 3%.

Water and Sanitation in Canada

- The value of the in-ground assets of Canadian municipal water supply and wastewater systems totals over \$100 billion.
- On average, 14% of municipal piped water is lost in pipeline leaks - up to 30% in some communities.
- Many Canadian homes lose more water from leaky taps than they need for cooking and drinking.
- About 82% of Canadians (1994 data) are served by wastewater treatment plants, compared with 85% Americans, 86.5% Germans, and 99% Swedes.
- About 18% of Canada's urban population live in municipalities that do not provide sewage treatment. In the Atlantic region, over 40% of the urban population do not have sewage treatment facilities.
- Less than 3% of the water produced at a large municipal water treatment plant is used for drinking purposes; during the summer, about half of all treated water is sprayed onto lawns and gardens.
- 26% of all Canadians rely on groundwater for domestic use. Large areas of the country are dependent on groundwater, for example, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Saskatchewan, and southwestern Ontario.
- It is estimated that some one to two million water wells are in use in Canada; approximately 38,500 new water wells are drilled each year in Canada.



Water Use in A Typical Canadian Household

- 💧 A Canadian uses an average of 326 litres of water each day for household and gardening purposes (in contrast, a person living in Sub-Saharan Africa typically uses 10-20 litres each day)
- 💧 Residential indoor water use in Canada is as follows: toilet - 30%; bathing and showering - 35%; laundry - 20%; drinking and cooking - 10%; cleaning - 5%
- 💧 A five-minute shower with a standard showerhead uses 100 litres of water, whereas a five-minute shower with a low-flow showerhead uses 35 litres
- 💧 Water consumption usually drops 18-25% after a water meter is installed

Water and Canada's Economy

- 💧 Canadians consumed an estimated 703 million litres of bottled water in 1998
- 💧 Canada's hydroelectric dams meet about two-thirds of the country's electrical needs
- 💧 295,000 litres of water are required to produce 910 kilograms of paper
- 💧 86,300 litres of water are required to produce 910 kilograms of steel
- 💧 1,000 litres of water are required to grow one kilogram of potatoes
- 💧 10 litres of water are required to manufacture one litre of gasoline
- 💧 One litre of oil can contaminate up to 2 million litres of water