

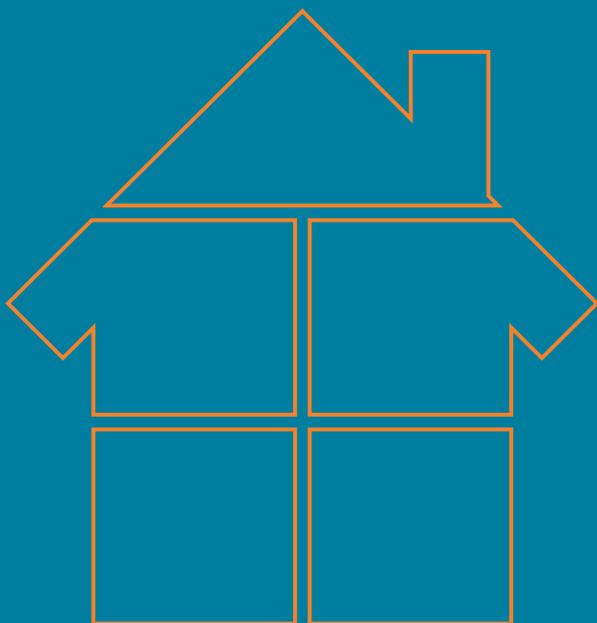
Without action, there is a 1 in 4 chance in the next 30 years that large numbers of households will have their water supply cut off for an extended period because of severe drought.

National Infrastructure Commission report (2018)

We want to see water use in England fall. New homes will be built in a way that reduces demands for water, energy and material resources.

25-Year Environment Plan, launched by the Prime Minister in 2018

Developing water efficient homes



Why build water efficient homes?

Water is vital for our daily lives – for drinking, washing, generating energy and growing the food we eat.

However, this precious resource is coming under growing pressure as we build more homes for more people and feel the effects of climate change and a greater risk of droughts.

If we don't take action to reduce water use now, our daily lives, communities, nature and the wider economy will all suffer.

Here's a few reasons why it's important to make new homes water efficient.

Your customers

All new homes should have a water meter, but some of your customers might not have had one before, so they'll thank you for doing everything you can to help them lower their water and energy bills. Protecting the environment is also important to them – especially for their children's future.

Planning – locally and nationally

Planning authorities expect limits of 125 litres of water per person per day on new developments, as part of the Building Regulations Part G. They can also ask for a lower limit of 110 litres as a planning condition. The Government is currently reviewing water use targets.

Protecting the environment

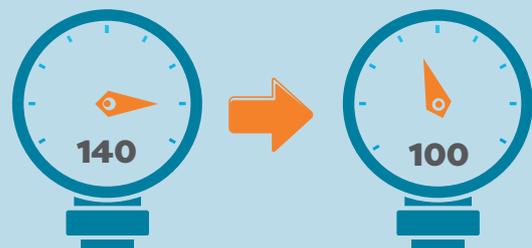
It's the right thing to do for people, nature and the economy. We all need to leave more water in the environment to protect rivers, streams and wildlife. The South East and East of England are already water-stressed and other areas are likely to follow.

Cost savings to you

Many water companies are offering to reduce or waiver water infrastructure charges, if you build water efficient homes. You pay these charges per property when you connect to the water network, to contribute to the cost of providing water services.

Your reputation

Your customers, communities and governing bodies will think more of you and your work if you show their needs and values are important to you.



The average UK water use is about 140 litres per person right now. The National Infrastructure Commission is recommending 118 litres for everyone – new homes and old – and water companies are setting ambitious targets in their long-term plans – some as low as 100.

All new homes must have a water meter – these helpful guidelines share best practice on meters.

[water.org.uk/developer-services/guidelines](https://www.water.org.uk/developer-services/guidelines)

How to create water efficient homes

A few simple choices can make a big difference to the water footprint of a new house.

Showers – water efficient showerheads can save more than a third of water, and the energy to heat it, while still providing a great shower experience.

Taps – inexpensive aerators add air into the water – using less and the flow feels the same.

Gardens – think about drought-resistant plants and mulch.

Toilets – dual flush toilets should have a maximum flush of six litres to comply with the Water Fittings Regulations. Make sure they are installed properly to avoid leaks – one of the biggest causes of water loss in homes. Flushes as low as 4 and 2.6 litres are available.

Appliances – choose energy and water efficient washing machines and dishwashers.

Water butts – installing a water butt on a down pipe is a great gift for new homeowners.

Ask your local water supplier about a **'trickle feed'** before a full connection.

Greywater or rainwater harvesting – both these can generate water to flush the loo, wash the car or water the garden. They are much more efficient and cost effective when installed during construction. Take care to install them correctly so they don't illegally cross-connect to the water supply. Find out more at watersafe.org.uk/alternativewater.

Tools to help

Contact your local water supplier - they have lots of advice and incentives to share. Other help includes:



The Water Label

The European Water Label rates bathroom products in terms of their water efficiency. Visit europeanwaterlabel.eu and look for A rated products.



The Calculator

This free calculator helps work out how much water your development will use and how you can reduce it to meet guidelines – you can access it at thewatercalculator.org.uk



Waterwise

Waterwise is an independent, not-for-profit organisation focused on reducing water consumption in the UK. Visit waterwise.org.uk for advice and support.

We need more ambitious water efficiency – for customers, the environment, society and the economy. It's perfectly doable to get down to 100 litres per person per day in the next 20 to 25 years.

Nicci Russell, Managing Director, Waterwise

Who can support you?

WaterSafe is the national register of approved plumbers in the UK, supported by all the UK water companies and the drinking water quality regulators.

Plumbing businesses on its register are all trained in the Water Fittings Regulations – the national requirements which govern the design, installation, operation and maintenance of plumbing systems, water fittings and appliances which use water.

As well as protecting the quality of drinking water, the regulations are designed to prevent the ‘waste and undue consumption of water’.

For most types of plumbing work, plumbers have a legal duty to notify the local water supplier before they start work and this can lead to delays. Approved plumbers can carry out some work without advanced notification.

Some water companies may also provide incentives if you use an approved plumber or groundworker to carry out work. A ‘work completed’ certificate issued by a WaterSafe plumber also provides a defence if challenged by a supplier enforcing the Water Fittings Regulations.

Approved products

WaterSafe-approved plumbers can also offer advice on approved plumbing products – both to avoid waste and protect water quality. You should make sure products you use have been tested against appropriate standards.

One easy way to check if a product is suitable is to look for an approval mark from organisations like the Water Regulations Advisory Scheme (WRAS) or Kiwa. Both provide directories of approved products at wras.co.uk or kiwa.co.uk/waterproducts.

Find WaterSafe plumbers at
watersafe.org.uk

