

## CONSERVING WATER DURING ROAD TRIPS

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Conserving water when you're at home is relatively simple. If not simple, it's fairly predictable. You have a routine, and within that routine you're able to find inefficiencies in your water usage. By cutting back in these areas you're able to save water and do your part to reduce your impact on the environment. But what about when those routines fly out your open car window? There are many more variables thrown into your day. You might not have the same opportunities to save water when you travel, but that doesn't mean opportunities don't exist. Here are some great ways to save water when you travel.

### Drinking Water

Before you leave, consider how much water you drink in a day and convert that to bottles of water. If you don't prepare by bringing a water bottle, you could be drinking five bottles of water a day, and not only does that negatively impact the environment by throwing out the bottles, but it often leads to a waste of water as well. The fact is, if you have a plastic bottle of water, it's very likely you'll forget it somewhere, or leave it in your car long enough that the water inside gets too warm to drink and you simply throw it out. You can combat this waste by bringing your own insulated water bottle. Make sure it's insulated, and this way if you leave the water bottle out somewhere, you're more likely to still have cool, refreshing water when you get back to it, eliminating the desire to throw it away. Further, if you are visiting a place that does not have safe drinking water from the tap, you can buy your own water in an environmentally responsible way. Rather than buying small bottles of water, you can buy safe water by the gallon and refill your water bottle that way. Finally, if you did not bring a water bottle, you can safely reuse your plastic water bottles multiple times.

- With the average American recycling rate, it's estimated that 38 billion water bottles make it to landfills every year.
- If you drink the recommended 8 gallons of water a day, you'd spend \$.49 every year drinking from the tap, or \$1400 per year in bottled water.

### Bathroom Routine

As much as travel can throw a wrench in your daily routine, some things likely remain the same. You will still probably have the opportunity to wash, brush your teeth, and shave, and during these moments you have the same opportunities to save water that you do at home. Make sure you're shutting the water off when you aren't using it. Don't let the faucet run when you're brushing your teeth or shaving and you can save gallons every day. Further, instead of standing in the shower just to enjoy the warm water, consider the impact that small action is having on the environment around you and shorten the shower as much as you can. By taking these small actions, you'll be saving water and pulling your environmental weight in small but meaningful ways.

- Bathing every day is not always best. In fact, it can be downright unhealthy for your hair. Bathing every other day is a viable option, and you're using half the water.
- You use approximately *five gallons* of water if you leave the water on when you brush your teeth.

## Laundry

If you're traveling long enough, you'll inevitably have to do laundry, if not for your sake, for the sake of those around you! Whether your hotel provides laundry services for you or you have to find a laundromat to do your own laundry, there are steps you can take to save water when you do your laundry. The first step you can take is to make sure you have a full load of laundry to go in before you do your laundry. It can be tempting, especially because it's not your water bill for the moment, to do a little laundry every day rather than having to haul and fold a full load, but environmentally speaking this is a bad idea. You're wasting gallons of water every time you do it, so make sure you make the most of every load. You can take things another step further by making sure the majority of the clothes you pack are lightweight, dark, and quick-drying. When you do this, you can wash your own clothes in the sink, eliminating the need to waste gallons of water with every load in a washer.

- Washing clothes accounts for as much as 40% of water usage in a household of four.
- The average American family washes 400 loads of laundry every year.