

## **Money Matter\$ - 18 March 2021**

**By Standard Chartered Bank**

### **Title: Save water save money**

The world as we see it today is limited in its resources. As such we all need to do our part in protecting what we have to ensure that our children and their children can enjoy this world as well. What we may not realise is that in supporting the environmental cause you can kill the proverbial two birds with one stone. Take water conservation for example. Save water and you can save your money, thus making it a win-win situation. But how does conserving water and the environment have any bearings on your financial savings plans?

It's simple. Like everything in this world, nothing comes for free – even water. Saving water effectively reduces the amount of your utility bills. By making a few simple changes to use water more efficiently, you could be saving a lot of money in the long run.

As we celebrate World Water Day globally next week on 22 March, let's take time to see how we can save this precious resource whilst saving our money.

Since a large percentage of water usage happens in the bathroom, it makes sense to begin there.

#### **Cutting down your shower time**

If you like taking your time in the shower, you may want to consider kicking that habit. A shower can use up to 9 to 45 litres of water per minute. Ideally you should aim to take a shower in under 5 minutes. If you don't think you can get squeaky clean in such a short amount of time, try to shorten your shower time by just a minute or two and you could save up to 90 litres. On average, people shower twice a day. If you do the math, that's over 5000 litres of water you can save in a month! Another way to save water while you shower is to turn off the showerhead when you soap yourself and shampoo your hair.

#### **Turn off that tap**

Whether you're brushing your teeth, shaving or soaping your hands, make it a point to turn off the tap when you don't need to use water for the moment. As a running tap uses up to 6 litres of water in a minute, turning off the tap while brushing your teeth can save up to 5 litres each time.

#### **Install water efficient appliances**

Take a quick look at your bathroom and if you see any old school appliances, it's time to get an upgrade – and this isn't just so it looks nicer. Installing water efficient appliances may seem like a costly job but it will pay off.

Old style toilets use way more water than needed to flush away waste, with as much as 14 litres wasted in one flush. Newer toilet designs are just as efficient at getting rid of waste without using up so much water. Opt to install the dual flush models that use as little as 2.6 and 4 litres of water per flush.

You could also install low flow showerheads. They are relatively inexpensive, easy to install and can be found at any hardware store. With these low flow showerheads, you would be cutting down the amount of water used during showers as they deliver less water per minute as opposed to regular showerheads. With advances in showerhead technology, you probably won't even tell the difference until you check your utility bills.

Another appliance you can replace is your water taps. You can opt for self-closing taps or even spray taps. With spray taps, you can reduce water flow from 6 litres a minute down to 2 litres a minute with the same effectiveness for hand washing.

### **Check for leaks**

A slow stream of water can waste almost 1000 litres a day – imagine the huge bite it takes out of your wallet. It would be worthwhile to check you taps and other bathroom appliances for any leaks. Fixing a leaky tap can save between 3000 and 5000 litres each year. Check for toilet leaks by placing a few drops of colouring into your toilet tank. If the colour seeps into the toilet bowl without flushing, you have a leak.

So now that you've sorted out how you can manage water usage in your bathroom – what about other places in your house?

### **Take caution with the hose**

A regular hosepipe uses as much as 1000 litres of water per hour so you may want to consider switching to a pistol-style hose nozzle if you want to cut down on your water usage because they shut off automatically.

### **Collect rain water**

Since it rains quite often here, it would be useful to install a rain barrel. The rain water collected can be used to water your plants in your garden or washing external areas of your home. Rain harvested water could potentially save up to 50% of your water costs.

### **Monitor your meter**

A final tip for you to ensure efficient water usage and effectively, cutting your costs, would be to check your water meter regularly. The readings can give you an indication to trends or leakages. Turn off all taps and water outlets and take a reading of your meter. Wait for 30 minutes and then take the next reading. If you see a change in the dial or numbers despite having all your appliances turned off, there's a leak in your pipes.

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