

SES Business Water's guide to water efficiency in the workplace



As a water supplier, we know just how precious water is as a natural resource. That's why we're encouraging businesses to make a real effort when it comes to water efficiency – and saving water is not only good for the environment, but there are also some tangible commercial benefits too. In this guide, you'll find out how to make water efficiency a priority in your organisation.



When you're looking to introduce any new initiative within your business, the first step is often convincing the senior management team to get on board. To do this, you'll probably have to prove why it's worth implementing – will it be worth investing the time and money required?

If you're asked to explain how a water efficiency program could benefit your business, here's what to say:

A circular icon showing a hand holding a water drop.

Saving water will lower your overheads

If you use less water, then you should see a reduction in your water bills. Obviously, the more you can reduce your water usage, the larger your savings should be. However, even small changes can make a difference to your costs – something as simple as repairing a tap washer can save you £18 a year, which will really add up if you have numerous leaky taps over multiple sites.

A circular icon showing a white leaf on a dark red background.

Saving water will boost your environmental credentials

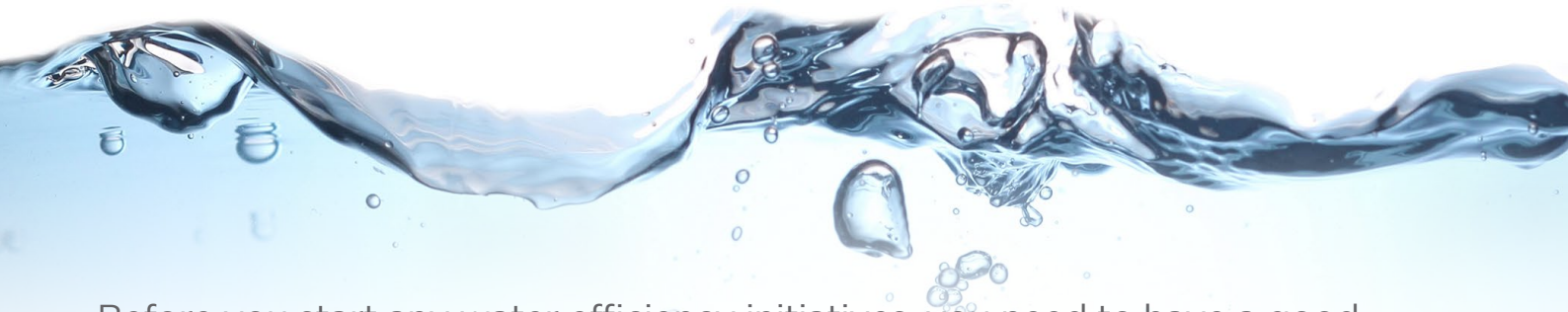
Water is a precious resource – only 2.5% of the world's water is fresh water, and only 1% of the freshwater is easily accessible. If your business actively works to reduce its water consumption, you should be able to improve your sustainability and boost your CSR credentials.

A circular icon showing a white footprint on a dark grey background.

Saving water will reduce your carbon footprint

A lot of energy goes into treating and supplying the water that is used on your site and making your wastewater potable again. This means that the less water you use, the lower your carbon emissions will be.

Where are you now?

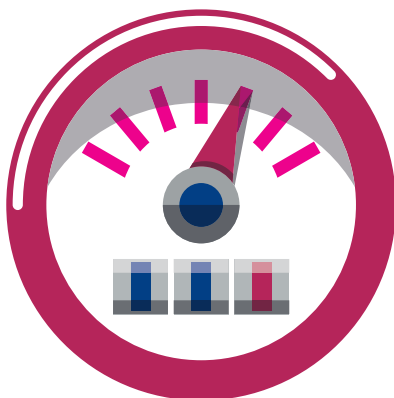


Before you start any water efficiency initiatives, you need to have a good understanding of your current water usage. A water audit will enable you to get a good perspective on your consumption – here’s how to carry out a simple audit:

01

Read your water meter

Most businesses have a metered supply, so check your latest bill – do you have a recent meter reading (not an estimate)? If not, take a reading and make a record of it, so you know where you’re starting from.



02

Compare your usage

Look at your meter reading from a water bill at around the same time last year. How has your consumption changed? If your consumption has increased and there’s no obvious reason for the rise (such as an office expansion or an increase in staff numbers) then further investigation is wise – you could have a leak.

Smart meters can give you a more accurate understanding of your consumption and help you to become more efficient – **find out more here.**

Take action!



Now that you've got a good idea of your current water usage, you can start your journey to becoming more water efficient. **Here's how:**

Installing **water saving devices**

5,000

If you have older toilets (fitted before 2001), placing displacement devices in the cisterns could help you to save up to **5,000 litres of water per year.**



Businesses that have showers on site can benefit from installing water efficient shower heads, which use up to

40% less water



Install taps with passive infrared (PIR) sensors to prevent taps from being left on when not in use.



Did you know?

A running tap wastes over 6 litres of water per minute.

Take action!



Changing behaviour

No matter how many water efficiency devices you install, you're unlikely to see significant changes unless you get your staff on board.

Get them involved by:



Informing staff

of efficiency measures and including them in staff inductions, so everyone understands how they can save water at work.



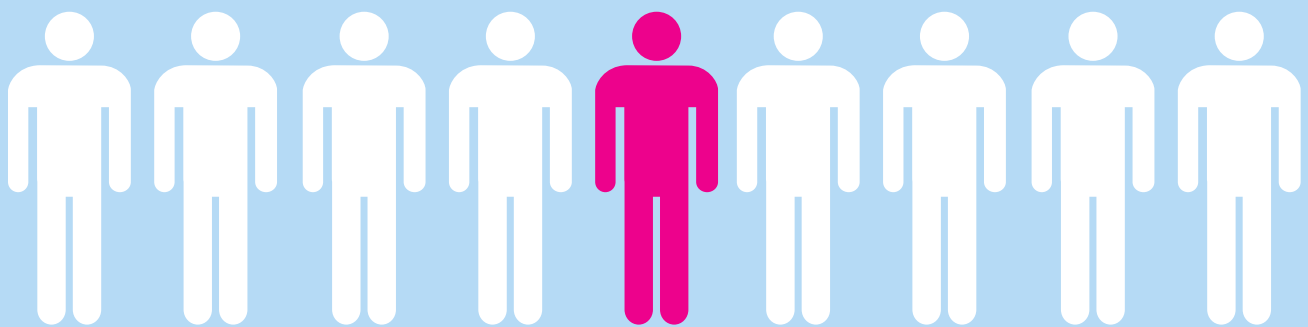
Appointing a 'water champion'

that will oversee your initiatives and ensure that staff are engaging with water-efficient processes.

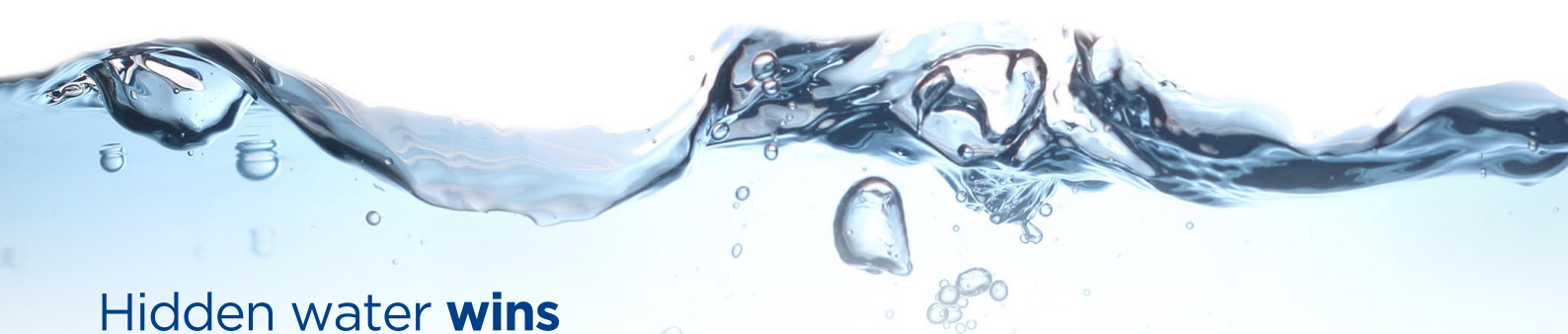


Reminding them

of the small changes they can make to save water, like making sure the dishwasher is full before turning it on or using the short flush on dual-flush toilets. Try putting up our Water Champion posters in your toilets and kitchen!



Take action!



Hidden water **wins**

You may be wasting water without knowing it – many everyday business activities may seem ‘dry’, but require a lot of water behind the scenes.

Here’s a few that might surprise you:



**It takes
10 litres
of water**
to produce just one sheet of paper! Go paperless where possible (our e-billing service means no more paper bills).



Producing one litre of petrol can use anything from 13 to 27 litres of water, so consider holding video conferences rather than asking staff to travel from other sites, or introduce a carpooling or bike to work scheme.

13-27ltrs

Producing foodstuffs demands a significant amount of water – a staggering **4,325 litres** of water are needed to produce **1kg** of chicken ! If your business has a canteen ensure it’s not wasting food.



1kg

Drink tap water rather than buying bottled water – **one litre** of bottled water can take up to **5 litres** to produce it

Finding the funds

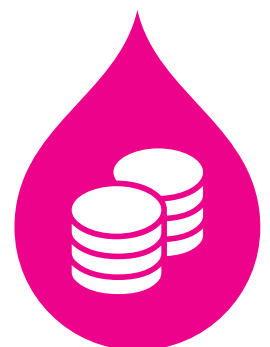


You don't have to spend to save water -

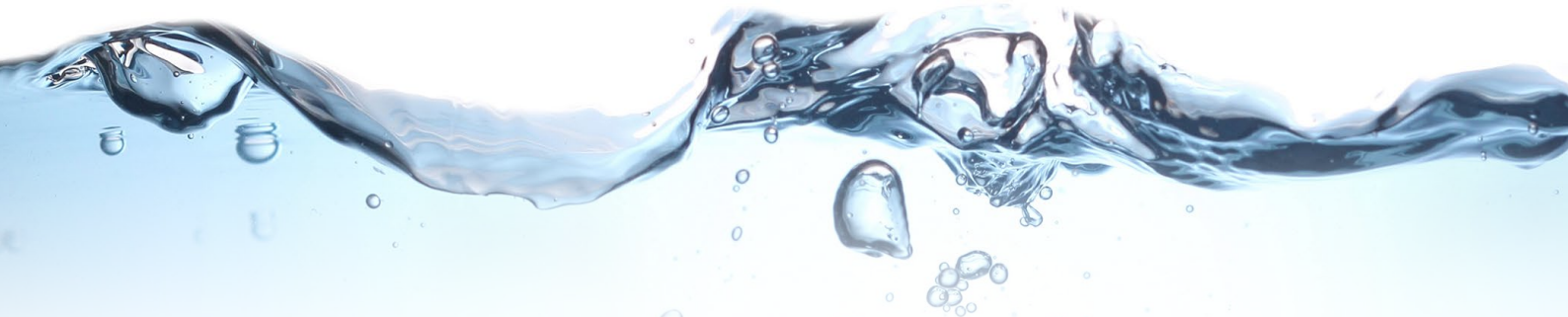
there are lots of low-cost or free changes you can make that will make a noticeable difference to your water bills.

Some water saving products and technologies will also fall under the Enhanced Capital Allowance scheme for water, meaning that you can write off all of your investment in these products against your taxable profits for the financial year they were implemented in.

The scheme covers a wide range of water saving devices, from automatic shut-off taps to low-flow showerheads, **so it pays to check if you're eligible.**



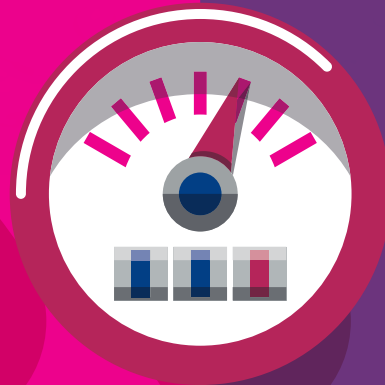
Measuring effectiveness



Once you've implemented a water efficiency scheme, it shouldn't be long before you **start seeing results.**

It's important to monitor your water usage to ensure that your efficiency measures are working. Check your bills – if your costs and consumption are consistently lower than average, then you know that your efforts are being effective. You can also take meter readings between bills to make sure you're always aware of how much water you're using.

If you hit a plateau, it may be time to implement further water saving devices or practices.



You should share your findings with your team – letting staff know how small changes to their behaviour has affected your water usage should encourage them to continue saving water.

Share your achievements with your senior management team too; demonstrating how water efficiency measures have affected your bills should give them the proof of return on investment that they need.

Ready to save water in your business?

Download our Water Champion posters and you can start today!