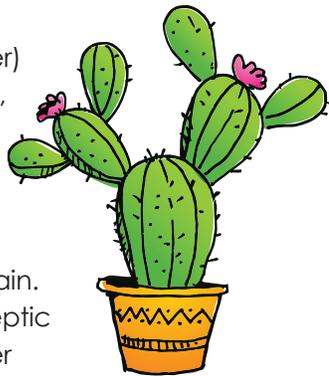


The Importance of Water Conservation in AZ



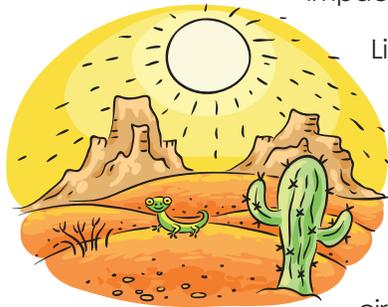
Water is a very valuable and expensive resource that we use every day. Although 71% of our Earth is water, only 1% is usable freshwater that is contained within the polar ice caps. Water is found in oceans, glaciers, lakes, rivers, streams, and ice caps. As stated

previously, not all water is usable freshwater. The tap water that comes to your home has traveled a long distance through surface sources (such as the Colorado River) or from groundwater. In rural areas, wells may bring water from the groundwater in underground aquifers. Water leaving a home is called wastewater and must be cleaned before it can be used again. Wastewater is usually treated by septic systems in rural areas or wastewater treatment plants in urban communities. If septic systems or water treatment plants become overloaded due to the overuse of water, they are not able to clean the wastewater properly. In case of a drought, there may be imposed water restrictions that impact everyone.



Living in a desert means that we must conserve water due to the lack of rainfall. Each year, Arizona receives less than 10 inches of rain each year. Under normal circumstances, many plants

and animals would run out of water quickly. The only way we are able to live here is by carefully using the water from other sources besides rainfall. Fortunately, Arizona is able to get the water it needs through the Central Arizona Project. It allows us to survive in the harsh desert climate with plenty of water.



We use water for drinking, bathing, cooking, and doing the dishes or washing clothes. We may even use additional water for watering our plants and

garden or washing our cars. Also, water is used for recreational purposes, such as swimming in the pool or running through the sprinklers on a hot day. Due to our desert climate, people should become active in conserving water. A good way to start is to simply turn off running water whenever it is not being used, such as when brushing your teeth or washing dishes. Shower times can be shortened and the amount of water used in bathing can be reduced. Households can install special water saving equipment, such as low-flow showerheads that have smaller holes or drip irrigation systems. A good rule of thumb would be to treat water as a precious resource that should only be used when necessary. After all, we live in a desert environment!

