Everyone Needs Water

"When the well's dry, we know the worth of water."—Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790)

Water is absolutely essential to our survival. A person can live for about a month without food, but only five to seven days without water.

Roughly 70% of the adult human body is made up of water.

At birth, water makes up approximately 80% of an infant's body weight.

A person needs 4 to 5 gallons of water per day to survive.

While the recommended daily amount of water is eight cups, not all of it must be consumed as water. Nearly every food or drink item provides some water to the body.

Water dissolves more substances than any other liquid. Wherever water travels, it carries chemicals, minerals, and nutrients with it.

The average person in the United States uses approximately 100 gallons of water each day, most of it accounted for by lawn watering and toilet flushing.

WATER: A Precious Natural Resource

Between 70 and 75% of the earth's surface is covered with water—about 325 million cubic miles.

Of all water on earth, 97.5% is saltwater. Only the remaining 2.5% is fresh water, but almost 70% is frozen in the polar icecaps. Less than 1% of the world's fresh water is accessible for human use. It is found in lakes, rivers, reservoirs, and underground aquifers.

Water is recycled—over and over again. The same water that existed on the earth billions of years ago is still present today.

The United States uses about 346 billion gallons of fresh water daily for irrigation and electric power.

Approximately 85% of U.S. residents receive their water from public and private water utilities. The remaining 15 percent supply their own water from private wells or other sources.

By the time a person feels thirsty, his or her body has lost over 1% of its total water amount.

Weight loss as a result of intense physical activity is the result of water loss, not fat.

Water = Health

Water helps to maintain healthy body weight by increasing metabolism and regulating appetite.

Drinking water leads to increased energy levels. The most common cause of daytime fatigue is actually mild dehydration.

Water leads to overall greater health by flushing out wastes and bacteria that can cause disease.

Drinking adequate amounts of water can significantly reduce joint and/or back pain, and prevent or alleviate headaches.

Water naturally moisturizes skin and ensures its proper cellular formation to give it a healthy, glowing appearance.

Water aids in the digestion process and prevents constipation.

Water is the primary mode of transportation for all nutrients in the body and is essential for proper circulation.

WATER: A Global Humanitarian Crisis

1.1 billion people— approximately one in six—don't have regular access to a safe water supply.

2.6 billion people worldwide lack access to improved sanitation—almost 40% of the world's population.

The average American family uses 350 gallons of water at home each day while the average African family uses only about 5 gallons.

Millions of women and children in the developing world spend several hours each day collecting water from distant and often polluted sources.

Fifty percent or more of the water systems installed in developing countries fail, mostly because they are built without community involvement and often use parts that are not locally available.

Almost two in three people lacking access to clean water live on less $2 a day.

In developing countries, poor people who live in slums often pay 5 to 10 times more for water than others living in the same city.

Unsafe Water Kills

If not treated and/or stored properly, water can be a breeding ground for pathogens causing a host of diseases including chronic diarrhea, cholera, typhoid, dysentery, and infectious hepatitis.

Every 15 seconds, a child dies from a preventable water-related disease—almost 5,000 per day.

For children under five, water-related diseases are the leading cause of death.

Unsafe water is implicated in 80% of all sickness and disease worldwide.

At any given time, half of the world's hospital beds are occupied by patients suffering from water-related diseases.

In the past ten years, diarrhea has killed more children than all the people lost to armed conflict since World War II.

Thanks to chlorinated water supplies, disease and death from typhoid, dysentery, and cholera has largely disappeared from the U.S. Unfortunately, these diseases are still rampant—and killing people—in the developing world.

Sustainable Solutions

No intervention has greater overall impact upon economic development and public health than the provision of safe drinking water and improved disposal of human waste.

Our society has the technology, knowledge, and resources to solve the global water crisis. We just need the will.

It is estimated that for every $1 spent on international water and sanitation development, $8 is gained in cost savings and productivity.

Human health improvements are influenced not only by access to clean water, but also by access to adequate sanitation facilities and improved hygiene.

Only when safe water and sanitation are available can other development goals be met.

Give a hand up, not a hand out. By involving community members in their own water and sanitation solutions, they take ownership and can maintain these systems for the long term.

Simple technologies like gravity-fed water systems, protected springs, shallow wells, and latrines can ensure safe water and save lives.

WATER For PEOPLE

Water For People helps people in developing countries to improve their quality of life by supporting the development of locally sustainable drinking water resources, sanitation facilities, and health and hygiene education programs.

Our vision is a world where all people have access to safe drinking water and sanitation; a world where where no one suffers or dies from a water- or sanitation-related disease. **www.waterforpeople.org**

drinking water?

For 1.1 billion people in the developing world,
this might be as good as it gets.
Unsafe water kills **6,000 people every single day.**
We can't go on letting people die this way.
Find out how you can help.

www.waterforpeople.org

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