

Waterwise Press Release, 24 November 2011

Showers vs. Baths: facts, figures and misconceptions

Any opportunity to promote water efficiency in the media is welcomed by Waterwise. However, contrary to conclusions drawn from a recent study, baths are not necessarily more eco friendly than showers.

In addition to our own research on water efficiency any work done by other agencies and companies that contribute to the evidence base for water efficiency (and our understanding of how people use water in their homes) is valuable. But recent headlines suggesting that baths could be more eco-friendly than showers can easily be misunderstood; while it's true that power showers can use more water than a bath, **most showers use significantly less water than baths.**

According to the study, the average eight-minute shower used 62 litres of hot water, and some power showers can use up to 136 litres, compared with an average bath's 80 litres. Our own research shows that a 'waterwise shower' – getting the job done in four minutes under a water-efficient showerhead – **uses just 32 litres.** As well, new aerated, regulated or optimised showers can give the feel of a power shower without the wastage. Even **four minutes under a water-inefficient power shower is still more waterwise than the average bath.**

And using less water in the bathroom isn't just about the environment – there is a strong link between the hot water you use and the size of your energy bill. From the dishwasher to the bathtub, saving water saves money.¹

Regardless of whether you choose to shower or bath, there are simple ways to save yourself time, water and money. For example:

- Fill up baths with just the amount of water you need – no need to fill right to the top
- Shower or bathe with a friend
- Install a water efficient showerhead – many are available for less than £30 – and the savings on your water and energy bill mean you'll get that money back in less than a year
- Take a shorter shower – by cutting a minute or two off the time you spend under the water – and you can save yourself time and a few quid off your energy bill and more if you're on a water meter.

Jacob Tompkins Managing Director, Waterwise

"The energy associated with heating water in the home is about 5 per cent of UK CO2 emissions and it's around a quarter of energy bills. That's a big piece of our carbon footprint, and a big chunk of household bills."

"Switching from baths to showers generally saves water, as long as you're not installing a massive power shower with a pump on"

"Most people can enjoy a nice hot shower and get clean in 5 minutes. Any more time than that and it's time and money going down the drain."

For more information about Waterwise and water saving tips please visit www.waterwise.org.uk

Notes to Editors

Waterwise is an independent, not for profit, non-governmental organisation focused on decreasing water consumption in the UK and building the evidence base for large scale water efficiency. We are the leading authority on water efficiency in the UK. Our aim is to reverse the upward trend in how much water we all use at home and at work. For more information please visit www.waterwise.org.uk

Contact:

Ryan Millar
Communications Manager
0203 4632 402
rmillar@waterwise.org.uk
3rd Floor, 89 Albert Embankment
London SE1 7TP

ⁱ See our recent Life + RENEW project done with the Energy Saving Trust for more on this.
<http://www.waterwise.org.uk/pages/life-renew-project.html>