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## Change for Water

Here in the desert we all see what the drought we are in is doing to our state. Not only is the drought affecting the plants and rivers, but human life as well. There are plenty of people in our state, mostly on reservations, that are living without water. Struggling to find water and trying to conserve the little that they do have is a daily routine. Many people don't realize how important it is to try and conserve water. They don't have to worry about whether they are going to have water the next day or not. These people are the ones that take water for granted and continue to waste it as if it isn't going away.

Showers are the main cause when it comes to wasting water. For some, showering is one of the best parts of the day. Whether it be jumping in and taking your time to wake up in the morning or just standing in a steaming hot shower to try and relax after a long day, you are wasting it. According to the Home Water Works website, 2.1 gallons of water comes out per minute. So, if you usually take a 20-minute shower every day, that is 42 gallons of water that is going down the drain. Cutting your daily shower by half the time is the first step to help save water. I mean why should a person complain about only getting a 10-minute shower when there are people who don't even have water to take a shower at all.

Another way that wastes a lot of water is letting your faucets/shower run while waiting for the water to get warm. We all have the habit of letting the water run while waiting for the water to heat up, but it just wastes gallons of water; especially if we do this more than once a day. Instead of letting that water go down the drain, we can collect it and use it for other things around our home. For instance, if you fill up a bucket of water while the cold water runs, you could use that water to water your trees, grass or plants outside. Doing this will help save some water and prevent you having your water hose running outside. Having a good-looking yard is a plus, but at what cost?

According to the Home Water Works website, “An average American household of 3 uses between 18.1 and 26.7 gallons (68.5 and 101.1 L) per day for all faucets (bathroom, kitchen, and utility sink). This amounts to between 6,600 and 9,750 gallons (25 and 36.9 m<sup>3</sup>) per household per year for faucet use.” In order for us to change these numbers, we need to invest in low flow faucets. By changing your faucets to low flow faucets or by adding an aerator to your current faucets, you can save up to 3,150 gallons a year in your household. That is a lot of water that can be saved if most people made the change. It would be an easy and possibly cheap way to conserve water.

While we are changing our faucets to low flowing faucets, we might as well work on our toilets as well. We may not realize how much water can be wasted with a simple flush. According to the water saver website, older toilet models use about 3.5 gallons of water for each flush. If we were to install low flow toilets, we could save 3.4 gallons of water on one flush. We can also save water by not flushing so much. It may sound a little on the gross side, but if we

were to not flush when we just urinate, we could cut the number of flushes a day to a minimum. That water saving hack may be harder to follow; however, it is an option.

I would say that many people can relate to these water-wasting issues. Some may think that they aren't doing any harm at all, but their daily water usage is contributing to our water drought. If people were to live in the life of someone who lives without water daily, I'm pretty sure that they would be doing everything they can to conserve water. Taking water for granted is an issue that must be fixed, but for that to happen a change must be made. Change can sometimes be rough, but if you are doing it for a good cause then it will all be worth it in the end.