

Water in Our Lives

PEOPLE USE A LOT OF WATER EVERY DAY. HOW MUCH DO YOU USE?

A person can live without food for more than a month. Without water, a person dies in less than one week. We need water inside our bodies.

We need water outside our bodies, too. We need to wash our clothes, our dishes, our food, and our bodies. A person can easily use seven and a half liters of water a day to brush his teeth.

We also need water to make food. It takes three and a half liters of water to process¹ the meat for one hamburger.

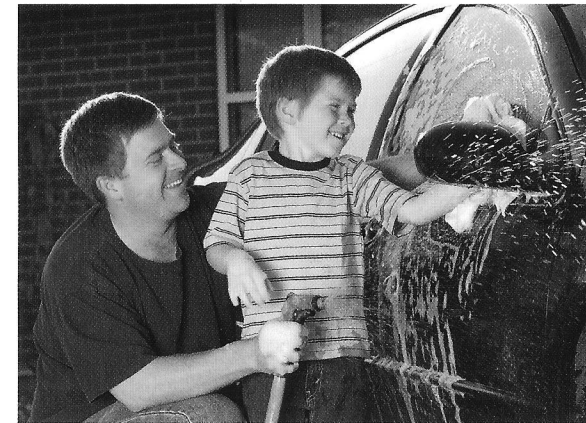
¹process: make, change one thing into another

We even need water for the cars we drive. It takes 7,843 liters of water to make four new tires for a car.

Not everyone uses the same amount² of water, however. The average person in the United States uses 2,500,000 liters every year. That's the same as an Olympic swimming pool! Someone in China uses about 700,000 liters in a year. People in Uganda or Ethiopia use about 5,000.

One reason for this big difference is the way people use water. Do you leave the water running when you brush your teeth? That's about 11 liters per minute. Do you take a shower or a bath? A five-minute shower uses about 75 liters of water. A full bathtub can hold 130 liters. Do you wash your car in the sunshine, or do you wait until it rains?

²amount: a lot or a little



Washing cars in sunshine uses more water.