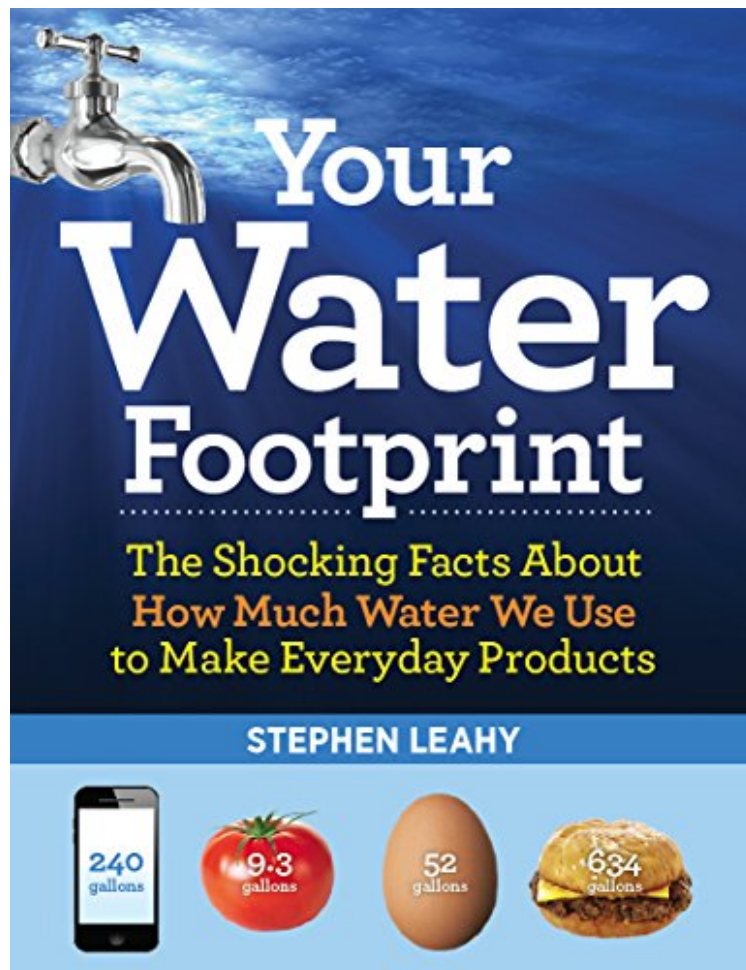


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Your Water Footprint: The Shocking Facts About How Much Water We Use to Make Everyday Products

Stephen Leahy

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Stephen Leahy : Your Water Footprint: The Shocking Facts About How Much Water We Use to Make Everyday Products before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Your Water Footprint: The Shocking Facts About How Much Water We Use to Make Everyday Products:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Four StarsBy Acquisitions, UNLV LibrariesNo problem0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Jim W.interesting1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Visual Guide to Your Direct and Indirect Water Consumption.By mirasreviews"Your Water Footprint" is an attempt to inform the public, in terms easy to understand, about the impending global water crisis and our part in it. It allows readers to get an idea of their "water footprint", which goes beyond the direct water usage that we're all familiar with, which is the amount of water we use from faucets, toilets, etc. or the amount on your water meter, if you

have one. Total water footprint includes "virtual water" as well, which is the "total amount of fresh water required to produce an item or carry out an activity". It's how much fresh water we need -or want- to sustain our lifestyle. Stephen Leahy is a Canadian environmental journalist, and this book is written for a North American audience, so amounts are presented in both liters and gallons. Water is considered to be consumed when it is used and not returned to an accessible location for re-use. Leahy begins with an example that provides of taste of what's to come. He takes us through the water footprint of a 17-ounce bottle of cola, from the agriculture to the manufacture of the bottle, the drink, and packing. We see why it takes as much as 350 similar bottles of water to produce one bottle of soda. He explains where fresh water comes from and what the sustainable yield of a body of fresh water, like a lake, might be. He makes the connection between water and energy consumption, as energy production is very water-intensive, making it the second-largest use of fresh water after agriculture. Then on to the meat of the book, which is organized into four chapters that consist primarily of infographics designed to make it easy to visualize how much water a given product or process uses. Underneath each is a text blurb, so you can read and/or look at the pictures. "The Big Picture" helps the reader visualize the world's fresh water supplies, in lakes and aquifers, and its future, particularly in water-scarce nations. "At Home" shows what common residential activities and products cost in terms of water. "Food" breaks it down for common foods. "Manufacturing and Farming" focuses on the amount of water required for energy extraction, automobiles, and the pulp paper industry. In his conclusion, Leahy points out that fresh water is "ridiculously underpriced", so global trade ignores the costs inherent in depleting water, especially in those countries that will soon be facing a shortage. He advocates "valuing and managing water appropriately", not only to save dwindling resources but to prevent civil unrest in some parts of the world. That is followed by a few pages of tips for conserving water. By Leahy's own admission, there are different ways of calculating water footprint. Sources are listed in the back by page number, and you can find the full title, publisher, or web address for each source in the Resources list. Without looking up each source, it isn't possible to know how the numbers were calculated. The book claims that a 10-minute shower uses 40-50 gallons of water. But my shower is 2 gpm, and I've never seen a shower that spits out more than 3 gpm. Other facts may bear on the issue, as in the case of cloth versus disposable diapers. Cloth diapers take far less water to produce, but you must wash them. Water consumption to support meat versus vegetarian diets are based on a 3400-calorie diet, but who eats that? The book claims that the average American uses 100 gallons of direct water per day, but I can't imagine how. "Your Water Footprint" is visually appealing and simple for adults and children to understand, but I would have liked more behind-the-scenes comparisons. The author compares, say, different foods or synthetic versus natural materials. I would have liked graphics comparing the water use of different types of irrigation, which seem to bear on the water footprint of agricultural products. I would also have liked graphics comparing water consumption of solar, nuclear, coal power, biofuel, oil from a well, oil from fracking, and oil from tar sands. The author does provide graphics for biofuel and oil from tar sands, and he discusses other energy sources in his introduction. But side-by-side graphics for all of them would have been helpful. As much of the water used in raising cattle comes from growing their feed, an analysis of grass-fed versus corn-fed cattle would also be welcome. The fact is that a lot of water is wasted, and no one is going to conserve water until he has to pay for it. I pay nearly three times what I use in water, because my apartment is not submetered. Others are getting a lot of free water at my expense. When water was cheap, it was included in rents. But prices are rising, and I expect water bills to eventually rival energy bills. Yet new residential buildings are going up with no submetering for water. LEED standards for "green" building design make no requirement for water submetering in multi-family buildings and give only 1 point for reducing indoor water use by 40% from the baseline, which is normally done by installing restrictive appliances rather than allowing tenants to manage their own consumption and pay for it. At some point, people will no longer feel inclined to pay for their neighbor's water (over)consumption.

The average American lifestyle is kept afloat by about 2,000 gallons of H₂O a day. The numbers are shocking. Your Water Footprint reveals the true cost of our lifestyle. A "water footprint" is the amount of fresh water used to produce the goods and services we consume, including growing, harvesting, packaging, and shipping. From the foods we eat to the clothes we wear to the books we read and the music we listen to, all of it costs more than what we pay at the check-out. The 125 footprint facts in this book show the true cost of our lifestyle and what it is doing to Earth, including draining it dry. The "Virtual Water Concept" shows the amount of water used in human activities. Presented in clever, understandable graphics, Your Water Footprint raises readers' awareness of how much water is used to make the things we use, consume and grow. What we put on our dinner table has a very high cost. Nearly 95 percent of our water footprint is hidden in the food we eat: One pound of lettuce costs 15 gallons of freshwater; mango 190 gallons; avocado 220 gallons; tofu 244 gallons; rice 403 gallons; olives 522 gallons; pork 1,630 gallons; butter 2,044 gallons; chocolate 2,847 gallons; and beef 2,500 to 5,000 gallons. A slice of bread costs 10 gallons but if you eat it with a slice of cheese, it takes another 13 gallons. One glass of beer takes 20 gallons of water, and just one standard cup of tea costs 120 same-sized cups of water. A cotton t-shirt takes almost as much water as beef, a pair of jeans even more. In fact, all aspects of our daily lives require water in some way, shape or form. The saying that "nothing is free" applies more to water than anything else we consume, considering just three percent of the world's water is drinkable and that

we are using more of it than ever before. Factor in climate change, population growth and pollution and we have an unsustainable situation. Many experts predict dire water shortages if we continue on our current path. Your Water Footprint is riveting. Consumers of all ages will be stunned by what it reveals. It is an excellent reference and an exciting way to introduce the resource-consumption equation to students.

From School Library JournalGr 4ndash;8mdash;With exceptionally clear and informative prose and an abundance of well-designed infographics, this book presents the shocking facts about our water usage. Quite simply, we are using too much water in our everyday lives and this consumption cannot be sustained. Consider, as Leahy points out, that it takes 634 gallons of water to produce a single cheeseburger or 660 gallons of water to produce one cotton shirt. This title provides an impressive amount of data, making the issue of water use concrete and inescapable. Leahy helps readers understand the nature of the problem by highlighting what is important to know about our global, national, and local water consumption and why; explaining the significance of concepts such as water footprint (or the amount of water it takes to produce the goods and services consumed by an individual or community); emphasizing noteworthy ideas; and providing suggestions for making wise choices. To assist readers in becoming informed decision-makers, the text and infographics work together to describe the scope of the problem by providing information about water consumption at home, in our foods, and in farming and manufacturing. The urgency of the situation is emphasized, but so, too, are the steps readers can take to address the crisis. This is an exemplary book for focusing on Common Core standards that emphasize the integration of text and graphics in both reading and writing. Pair this book with Paul Fleischman's *Eyes Wide Open* (Candlewick, 2014) to enlighten readers further about urgent water and ecology issues.mdash;Myra Zarnowski, City University of New York The book includes extensive references and an index, which makes it a useful reference tool and a gateway to learn more about this complex subject. (Tom Palmer *The Tampa Bay Ledger* 2015-02-15)Stephen Leahy's visual book, full of facts, figures and pictures helps the reader understand just how much water we use every day in ways we often don't realize. The beginning of the Water-saving Tips chapter sums it up nicely -- "By knowing how dependent we are on water, not only for our health but for our modern lifestyles, we can change what we do. We can reduce wastage, change habits and make water-smart product purchases, all of which can save both water and money." This fact-packed book would be a welcome addition to any educator's water resource library and is most suitable for students in grades 4 and up. The photos and visual comparisons are easy enough for younger students to comprehend and the facts and further descriptions add that bit of extra information that the older students will engage with. (Stacey Widenhofer *Green Teacher* 2015-06-23)Books about conservation are nothing new to nonfiction for teens, but the skillfully depicted infographics and mind-boggling facts make *Your Water Footprint* a must-buy for middle and high school libraries. What sets this book apart is that there is thorough discussion about the world of hidden water, or the water used in the manufacturing industry, including smartphones, clothing, and even the production of household items like televisions. Other chapter headings include information about water usage for the food we eat; for example, it takes forty-two gallons of water to produce one banana, or to produce one chocolate bar you would need 449 gallons of water. The book also addresses farming and agriculture water usage and the usage of water at home, informing readers that 30 percent of daily water consumption at home is used by flushing the toilet. The information paints a harsh picture of how we waste water and the impact of water usage and even the availability of water on the world. The last chapter includes tips for water conservation for the reader. Common Core Standards are most definitely met in this text, making it a sound book to be used in the classroom, as well as for recreational reading. The sources and references show that Leahy did his research when writing this book and also provide further reading for students who are looking for ways to reduce their water footprint. (Stephanie Wilke *VOYA* 2015-12-01)Environmental journalist Leahy delivers a brilliant and shocking exposé on precisely how much water we use, not just for personal hygiene but to create the products we wear and consume... Leahy's text is illustrated with graphics depicting the quantity of water required to produce each item discussed, from sugar beets to leather shoes to iPhones to meat consumption... Filled with color pictures, statistics writ large and easily comprehensible comparisons, Leahy warns that the future, in terms of our water usage, looks dire. (Publishers Weekly 2014-11-28)Leahy drops a tsunami of sobering facts and infographics on the heads of readers who take what comes out of their faucets for granted. Focusing not on fresh water use in general but on its "footprint"--meaning water that agricultural and manufacturing processes leave polluted or otherwise locally unusable--the author sprays his urgently toned narrative with alarming observations and eye-opening comparisons.... The wellspring of his argument is presented in dozens of image-based color maps and charts.... A heavy flood of information better suited as a resource for study and reports than an immersive consciousness-raiser. (Kirkus s 2014-11-15)(starred review) We know about our carbon footprint. Now environmental journalist Leahy alerts us to an even more daunting reality, our water footprint. There are no alternatives to water, and the supply of freshwater is finite. Obviously, we drink and use water in our daily routines, but we also consume massive quantities in agriculture and manufacturing. More than can be replaced. Leahy takes a uniquely clear and direct approach to revealing the magnitude of our hidden water profligacy by matching his exceptionally lucid narration with arresting, full-page infographics. We see that a pair of jeans, from cotton field to factory to you, requires 2,000 gallons of water. One measly liter of soybean-based biodiesel

fuel requires 11,397 liters, or 3,010 gallons, of water. Page after page of such eye-opening calculations recalibrates our understanding of the invisible role water plays in every aspect of our lives, jarring disclosures that can help us make choices, however modest. For example, the production of one cup of tea requires 9 gallons of water; one cup of coffee, 37 gallons; two pounds of tomatoes, 56.5 gallons; two pounds of beef, 4,068 gallons. As irresistible as it is alarming, Leahy's water footprint primer is a catalyst for conservation of our most precious endangered resource. (Donna Seaman Booklist 2014-11-01) Step away from that smart phone. Eschew that cheeseburger. Junk those jeans. If you think that giving up your nightly tub-soak for showers or buying a low-flush toilet has cut your environmental footprint down to responsible size, think again. The sad verdict is in, from a new book by environmental sleuth Stephen Leahy. Its title, *Your Water Footprint: The Shocking Facts About How Much Water We Use to Make Everyday Products* says it all.... Leahy, an award-winning Ontario environmental journalist who roams to the ends of the earth to report on environmental dangers, makes it clear that the most innocent-seeming actions and products are far from water-neutral. While billions of people on the planet face drought and water shortages, others in wealthy countries unwittingly splash the stuff around on goods that could be made or substituted for more frugally. That's important, Leahy points out, because while two-thirds of our "blue planet" is covered in water, only a tiny portion of it is drinkable. And when it's gone it's gone. (Olivia Ward Toronto Star 2014-10-17) Journalist Stephen Leahy's new book about water footprints is a great introduction to the mysterious world of water. (EcoCentric (Gracelinks.org) 2014-11-03) *Your Water Footprint* is a great example of a book that is shining the light on the impact we are having on the world's limited fresh water supply... The book answers some of those nagging questions that I know I have wondered about: Which is better cloth or paper napkins? What uses less water cloth or a disposable diaper? What fruit consumes the most water to produce? Is it better to drink coffee, tea or a soft drink for my caffeine fix? Which has less of a water impact: a cotton or a poly t-shirt? Beef, pork, lamb or chicken? Wine, beer or vodka? These and many other answers on our water consumption pour forth in this entertaining and extremely well illustrated book... a perfect read for those that are fascinated by our impact on the planet. (Doug Pushard Harvest H2o 2014-11-11) (Leahy's book) gives shocking insight into the "water footprint" that we use each day. We're all familiar with the term "carbon footprint", and this new term can be jarring when first learned, as it's not likely something you've heard about before. Open up *Your Water Footprint: The Shocking Facts About How Much Water We Use to Make Everyday Products* and you'll quickly learn that the world's most abundant resource is also the world's most abused... (It) will definitely change the way you look at everyday life -- from the food you eat to the way you consume household products. (Lisha Van Nieuwenhove The Uxbridge Cosmos 2014-11-06) Stephen Leahy provides some sobering information pertaining to our use of water. For example, the jeans that you are wearing took more than 7,600 litres of water to produce. According to Leahy "the average American's 'water footprint' -- the total amount of direct plus virtual freshwater use -- is about 8,000 liters (2,115 gallons) per day... While the statistics provided by the author can be somewhat depressing, he does include a section on "Water-saving Tips". When it comes to our dependence on water, ignorance isn't bliss. Once we are aware of how our day-to-day living impacts the world's most precious resource we can start taking responsible actions to reduce our water footprints. (Glenn Perrett Northumberland News 2014-10-09) Anyone living on the West Coast and desert regions of the United States is familiar with the concept of water scarcity. As global warming, food and commodity production, and population increases continue to affect the planet and its resources, water scarcity will continue to be an important and critical issue. Environmental journalist Leahy has created a guide for understanding just how much water is used in our daily activities and in the manufacturing of the products we consume, while putting into context current facts about the status of water availability. Readers will find the information, which is presented in an infographic-like style, easy to understand and to act upon. While the introduction and conclusion expertly unpack the complex issue of water use, the images and large text in the body of the book seem to be geared toward younger readers. However, this book is unique in its handling of a complex topic and is unlike other texts on the subject. The content is timely, important, and fascinating, though the infographic-style depiction of water use might not appeal to some adult readers. (Jaime Corris Hammond, Naugatuck Valley Community C Library Journal 2014-12-01) About the Author Stephen Leahy is an environmental journalist based in Ontario, Canada. His work has appeared in National Geographic, The Guardian (UK), Sunday Times and New Scientist. He is a senior science and environment correspondent at Inter Press Service News Agency (IPS), the world's largest not-for-profit news agency. He won the 2012 Prince Albert/United Nations Global Prize for Climate Change.