

Sports Turf Manager

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The Benefits of Rainwater Harvesting For Water Conservation

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The ever growing trend of being “green” or “eco-friendly” continues to move at a rapid pace. New technology and more information about products and practices seem to be hitting the mainstream daily. Our industry has already experienced the reduction in pesticides and the focus on water efficiency for irrigation. So why the persistent concern about water in Canada when everyone says we have the most freshwater available in the world? While this may be true, taking a closer look at some hard facts can be illuminating.

World Water Facts

Approximately 70 percent of the world is covered in water: 97.5% of that water is saltwater which leaves 2.5% as freshwater. Of this 2.5%, 68.9% exists in the form of glaciers or permanent snow melt. An additional 30.8% is groundwater including soil moisture, swamp water and permafrost. Therefore, only 0.3% of the world’s freshwater is stored in lakes and rivers.

Globally, one billion people do not have access to safe drinking water while 2.4 billion do not have proper sanitation. The addition of chlorine to drinking water has greatly reduced the risk of waterborne diseases.

Currently about 3,800 cubic kilometres of freshwater are withdrawn annually from the world’s lakes, rivers and aquifers. This is twice the amount that was extracted as recently as 50 years ago.

Canadian Water Facts

Canada has the largest area of wetlands in the world representing approximately 25% of the earth’s total. Our wetlands cover more than 1.2 million km², about 14% of our land area. Since 1900, 50% of the world’s wetlands have been lost.

In Canada, 9% of the country is covered in freshwater. This represents about 891,163 km². Canada has more lake area than any other country in the world. Approximately 60% of the country’s freshwater drains north, while 85% of



FOCUS ON WATER

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the population lives within 300 km of our southern border with the United States. Only about 1% of the water in the Great Lakes is replenished each year by snow melt and rain. Approximately 8.5 million Canadians rely on the Great Lakes for their water supply. Turn to page 11 for a breakdown of water usage in an average Canadian household. >>>



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