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Bengaluru is facing an acute water crisis; residents are relocating to secure a steady source of water supply, while some are protesting and demanding the government to provide water. Other cities too have their bouts with water woes; however, the unfortunate fact is, "People do not realise the importance of water conservation until their taps run dry," says an environment expert from Mumbai.

From embracing sustainable technologies to implementing simple yet effective habits, there are several ways in which one can save water; here are a few ideas:

• **Rainwater harvesting:**

Residents can install rainwater harvesting systems to collect freshwater. "Picture this, every drop of rain that falls on your roof is collected and stored for later use, whether it's watering your plants or flushing toilets. It's a simple yet powerful way to make a difference," explains Vandana Tripathi, assistant professor of general management at K J Somaiya Institute of Management who specialises in areas such as CSR and sustainability. It can help reduce the reliance on municipal water sources, thus saving the city a substantial amount of water throughout the year.

• **Collect and reuse greywater:**

Greywater from sinks, showers, and washing machines can be collected and reused for non-potable purposes such as watering plants or flushing toilets. Implementing a greywater recycling system allows residents to make the most of this resource.

• **Install water-efficient fixtures:**

Replace traditional faucets, showerheads, and toilets with low-flow alternatives. These fixtures use significantly less water without sacrificing performance, helping conserve water with every use. Gauranga Das Prabhu, director at ISKCON's Govardhan EcoVillage, an eco-community shares, "Install water-efficient faucets (flow rate less than four litres per minute or LPM), showerheads (flow rate less than six

Has water crisis got you worried? Here are some ways to turn it around

From installing water systems to easy home hacks, here are some smart techniques to conserve water during a water crisis



LPM), dual flush water closet (six/three litres per flush or LPF) and sensor-based urinals (flow rates one LPF) to reduce water consumption. Choose appliances with high energy star or BEE ratings to ensure water efficiency in dishwashers, washing machines, and other household equipment."

• **Fix leaks promptly:**

Even minor leaks can waste significant amount of water over time. Regularly inspect plumbing

fixtures and pipes for leaks and repair them promptly to prevent unnecessary water loss.

• **Optimise laundry practices:**

Shivam Agarwal, VP of strategic development at a Bengaluru-based realtor company, says, "Wait until you have a full load before running the washing machine as it maximises water efficiency by reducing the number of cycles needed. Additionally, consider using the shortest wash cycle possible for daily wear to further conserve water."

• **Practice water-smart gardening:**

Tripathi further adds, "Choose drought-tolerant plants for landscaping, as they require less water to thrive." Use mulch to retain

moisture in the soil and reduce the need for frequent watering. Additionally, water outdoor plants early in the morning or late in the evening to minimise evaporation.

• **Limit outdoor water usage:**

Minimise the use of sprinklers and hoses for lawn and garden irrigation, especially during dry periods. Instead, water outdoor plants manually using a watering can or hose with a shut-off nozzle to target specific areas and avoid unnecessary water wastage.

• **Conserve water while doing daily chores:**

Tripathi suggests, "Turn off the tap while brushing your teeth or washing dishes and only turn them on while gargling and rins-

ing. Shortening your shower time by just a few minutes can also make a big impact. And instead of reaching for the hose, grab a broom to clean your driveway or sidewalk—it's a small adjustment with a big payoff."

Prabhu adds, "Collect and reuse water from activities such as rinsing fruits and vegetables, washing hands, or cooking pasta. This water can be used to water plants or flush toilets. Use of bio-based soaps is recommended as the water leftover from washing dishes and clothes with these soaps can be used for watering plants."

• **Educate household members:**

Encourage everyone in the household to be mindful of water usage and to actively participate in water-saving efforts.

• **New homebuyer's checklist:**

"Prospective buyers must be mindful of the water conservation measures installed in the buildings and get clarity on the water sources from the builder. It is imperative to ensure water conservation initiatives are incorporated into the building design itself. Buyers should look out for low-flow plumbing fixtures and water-efficient appliances," says Tejashree Joshi, head of environmental sustainability at Godrej and Boyce, an electrical appliances manufacturing company.

Look for homes with efficient irrigation systems and drought-resistant landscaping to reduce outdoor water consumption. Consider properties with greywater recycling and rainwater harvesting systems to reuse water for non-potable purposes and decrease reliance on municipal water sources. Agarwal further adds, "General considerations like water pressure regulation, meter accessibility, and awareness of water sources and restrictions are crucial. Prioritising these aspects empower homebuyers to make informed decisions that not only save water and reduce bills, but also contribute to community sustainability." By implementing these techniques at home, residents can contribute to water conservation efforts during times of scarcity and help ensure a sustainable future.

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