

Global water shortage imminent, warn experts

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KUWAIT: World experts warned of looming water shortage around the world in the near future. According to some reports published about water usage, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia were on the top of the list of the countries which wasted water the most in the world. Different experts also agreed that the countries which depend on desalinated water waste it the most, considering the usage is more than 500 liters of water per person. While some people are aware of their high usage of water, others are more oblivious and think it's normal, as the cost of water is low.

The Ministry of Electricity and Water previously held many awareness campaigns to educate people of the negative effects of wasting water. Since the campaign is not active any more, people may have forgotten the message. Some people compare the cost of water back in their country and find it cheap here, so they don't pay much attention to the issue.

I don't think enough attention is placed on this issue, because the country doesn't make a big deal about it and it doesn't enter my consciousness. There are three of us at home and we consume a large quantity of water every day. Back in Canada, we were more careful regarding water wastage and wouldn't allow the tap to run during brushing and took quick showers since the water in the boiler was limited," stated Sarah, a 23-year-old Canadian.

According to Sarah, awareness is the key to saving water. "From a young age, we were taught to conserve water and energy. After staying here, I haven't been really paying attention to the amount of water I use. There has to be more awareness in the country to inform people how expensive it is to desalinate water. I don't think people know how much energy it takes to have clean water. We use faucets at home, which are installed to conserve water; if we have more of these in Kuwait, it would save water," she added.

According to Hatim, a 35-year-old resident of Hawally, the concierges are those who most waste water in Kuwait. "The quantity of water used by the concierges is massive when they wash cars in front of the building. Even when it was raining, I saw the haris washing the cars. When I tried to tell him that such wasteful behavior wasn't right, he didn't listen to me," he said.

Hatim provided some solutions like having inspectors watch and control different areas to ensure water isn't wasted unnecessarily. "I care to save water in my house, and I taught my children the same thing as our religion encourages us to do so. I think the Ministry of Electricity and Water or the municipality should send inspectors to fine those who waste water in the streets. There

should also be a limit to free water provided to each house and any family that exceeds it, should be charged more with the rent," he opined.

Amal, a Syrian expat also thinks there should be more awareness campaigns in the media regarding this issue. "I admit that I waste water quite a lot. When I shower or wash the dishes, I use a lot of water. In Syria, they always promote intelligent use of water and when we squander it, we feel guilty. It would also help if religious men give sermons on the importance of conservation, as people will pay more attention," she pointed out.

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