

Water Consumption Reduced in U.S.

VISTA, CA -- As the world continues to face water challenges, there is actually some good news about water use in the U.S., where it seems consumption is on the decline.

"New evidence suggests water use has been scaled back, and in some cases, significantly in recent years," said Klaus Reichardt, CEO of Waterless Co., Inc., a manufacturer of waterless urinal systems and other restroom products.

He draws his conclusion from a new book, "The Big Thirst," by Charles Fishman.

A writer for Fast Company magazine, Fishman's previous book, "The Wal-Mart Effect," was honored with the Financial Times' "Best Business Book of 2006" award.

According to Reichardt, the new book discloses many examples of reduced water consumption, most of which have received little notice or fanfare.

For instance:

- U.S. farmers use 15 percent less water today than 30 years ago, yet grow 70 percent more food.
- Power plants use less water than 30 years ago while generating more electricity.
- An IBM semiconductor plant in Vermont has cut water use by 29 percent over 10 years while increasing production 33 percent.
- Twenty-five years ago, Orange County, FL, where Orlando is located, mandated that all new facilities use purified wastewater for landscaping and related uses; today, the county has doubled in size, but has only had to slightly increase the amount of potable (drinkable) water it provides customers.
- In Las Vegas, 94 percent of all water is recycled for drinking and fresh water use has fallen 108 gallons per person in the past two years.

"Probably the biggest news is that the U.S. now uses less water today than in 1980 even though the population has increased and our economy has doubled," says Reichardt. "Much of it is not due to government regulation, but private industry, stepping up to the plate and developing more innovative technologies to reduce water consumption."

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