Tips for water saving in hotels

Every year, World Water Week emphasizes the importance of water in our lives and how we should manage all sources of drinking water in a sustainable manner.

Drinking water scarcity is a global problem that everyone is aware of as it is anticipated that by 2030, half of the world's population will live in water-scarce areas, with total demand exceeding total supply by 40%.

The majority of the water (97%) is in the oceans, with only 3% of drinking water (approximately two-thirds of which is in glacier ice in the poles) remaining. As a result, just 1% of drinking water is found in rivers, lakes, the atmosphere, and subterranean wells, and is eventually available to humans.

According to the latest research by SIWI, about 20% of the population lives in areas of water scarcity, that is, in places where the use of potable water "is approaching or has exceeded sustainable limits" and where "more than 75% river water is used for agriculture, industry or domestic use ". The private sector is one of the lead consumers of water and relies entirely on its production and distribution. The tourism industry, in particular, may be one in which a more efficient water use plays a prominent role, since it is part of the daily operations. This week, we will highlight some of the tips for water saving that can be implemented so that we can secure the future of our planet.

Establishing a water management plan for saving water

To set and achieve realistic and measurable goals, facilities need to devote time and resources for a thorough planning and subsequent monitoring.

The first step in creating water saving management plan will be the measurement of water consumption and setting certain tangible goals. It is important to know the starting point and
calculate exactly how much water is used. Therefore, there is need to install meters and record daily readings of the same. Further there is need to install multiple sub-meters at key consumption points (kitchen, laundry, guest area, swimming pool, etc.) to find the areas where more water is used and transform that measurement into economic terms: in this way you shall understand any effort to save water more as an investment than as an obligation. The illustration below is of a water meter taken during the Ecorating audit of Naboisho Camp in August 2021.

Developing strategies for every area

After establishing the volume consumed, the next step should be to establish guidelines to follow. If, for example, your hotel has a lawn, we must develop strategies aimed at improving water conservation. In this regard, one of the key factors is the irrigation system. If you want to reduce your water consumption, you must know what kind of vegetation to have. By knowing the characteristics of the flora, you get to know how much water you need and how often, which will allow you to establish patterns of action to avoid over-irrigation. Further, ensure that irrigation is done in the early morning to minimize water loss through evapotranspiration during the day.

Controlling and reducing water consumption

In this step, after the establishment of the guidelines, a facility must control and try to reduce the use of water. For this, there are various systems that constantly save water in hotels. By incorporating systems, such as toilets with dual flush cisterns or low-flow taps or shower heads, you’re considerably reducing the amount of water used.
Maintaining proper functioning facilities

After integrating systems of low water consumption in your hotels, you must still ensure that they properly work. It is a necessity when it comes to water consumption reduction, to always ensure that the mechanisms are in good conditions. Periodically review them to prevent any leakages or inefficiencies and possible faults that produce an opposite effect.

Optimizing the use of systems

In addition to efficient systems, you must optimize their use. For instance, in the case of laundry service, it’s essential to have a proper plan that allows you to control the time spent and consumption without neglecting customer service. Therefore, you must ensure that the devices operate in the best efficient way possible. With the measures in place, you will reduce water consumption and other costs associated – the amount of detergent used and energy consumption.

Training staff

The above steps won’t take effect if you don’t sensitize and build awareness of your employees. Therefore, this step is to promote actions and attitudes of your employees to demonstrate ethical behavior. The human factor is critical in any action for improvement in your facility, therefore, train your staff on water conservation, keep them informed about changes and improvements and incorporate guidelines for a responsible consumption into their routines and activities.

Raising awareness among customers

Finally, as with your employees, educate guests about the importance of saving water. With simple behavioral changes, such as closing the taps when they are not being used or reducing the number of towels a day, you can make improvements and involve guests in a management system that takes care of the environment and is sustainable over time. The illustration below is a picture of a towel placement notice displayed in the guest tents at Kicheche Mara Camp.
By making your business more eco-conscious and setting a good example, not only will you potentially attract more customers, but you'll also encourage others to follow in your footsteps. This will ultimately lead to increased consciousness regarding the importance of water conservation which can only have positive results in the end.