

**October 2015**

**Energy & Environment Committee**

Letter from the Committee

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**Do You Know Your Water Footprint?**

You may have heard of a carbon footprint, but are you familiar with a water footprint? A “water footprint” is the total amount of freshwater used by an individual either directly or indirectly. Direct water use is when you turn on a faucet or a hose for water. Examples include brushing teeth, showering, flushing the toilet, washing a car, or watering a garden. Indirect water is needed to produce, grow, or manufacture the items we use every day. This water is necessary for producing steel for your car, growing cotton for your jeans, and processing the food you eat.

Understanding the total contributions to your water footprint is the first step to creating a culture of conservation and truly protecting water on a larger scale. An often cited statistic is that the average person in the US uses nearly 100 gallons of water per day. However, that is somewhat misleading because that’s only the direct usage. When you include indirect usage, that number jumps to nearly 2,100 gallons per day! When you consider the vast amount of energy that goes into the withdrawal, treatment, and distribution of clean water, any changes you make that result in a reduction of your overall water footprint can have dramatic effects on saving water resources, reduced CO2 emissions (as a result of less energy consumption), and reduced infrastructure costs. For more information, including interactive tool kits to measure individual, residential, and business water footprints, visit <http://waterfootprint.org>.

Please join us for the 2015 Energy & Environment Outlook and Expo on October 14 from 2 - 6 p.m. at Mack Customer Center (2402 Lehigh Parkway South, Allentown). \*Please note new location!