

200,000 LITRES EACH A YEAR - WATER LOT OF WASTE



The UAE's alarming thirst could spell trouble as energy expert says we should pay more

A WATER expert has warned the UAE to turn off the taps - or face serious consequences.

The UAE uses 83 per cent more water than the global average per head of population, and about six times more than the UK.

People in the UAE use about 550 litres of water each daily - that's a whopping 200,750 litres a year.

Dr Walid Fayad, an authority on energy and utilities, said excess consumption in the GCC can no longer be ignored.

By Myra Philp

"Water scarcity is a reality in just about every Arab country," he said. "If they don't make changes, these countries will find themselves in serious trouble."

Fayad added that the excess use will lead to severe economic and environmental results, with countries burning fuel and money to desalinate water.

"Two-thirds of the potable water used in the UAE, Kuwait, Qatar and Bahrain is

desalinated," he said. "Governments need to reduce demand for, and increase the supply of, water."

Fayad suggests raising water bills to make the UAE realise there is a problem. He said at the moment residents "have no reason to suspect water is in short supply".

"There is a lack of awareness, largely because of subsidies that disguise costs and obscure the severity of the situation."

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'Greenery gives false view'

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Fayad added: "The only way this will change is if people understand there is a problem and become part of the solution."

Fayad revealed that only Saudi Arabia is ahead of the UAE in its "alarming" use of water, consuming 91 per cent more per capita than the rest of the world.

In his research for Booz&Co, a global management consulting firm, which helps the world's top businesses, governments and organisations, Fayad claimed that large

green spaces in the UAE, such as golf courses, give the impression that there is plenty of water, but recycled wastewater should be used for irrigation.

He added: "GCC residents and businesses have disregarded the consequences of their water usage to enjoy benefits more common in countries with ample rain. But with the population increasing in excess of two per cent a year there is a growing recognition within governments that current consumption patterns are unsustainable." myra@7days.ae