
Dare you take our shower survey - The Results

An ech₂o report • August 2015

With thanks to everyone who answered the questionnaires and to Safa El-Jamal for analysing the information and writing the report.

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ech₂o Shower Survey

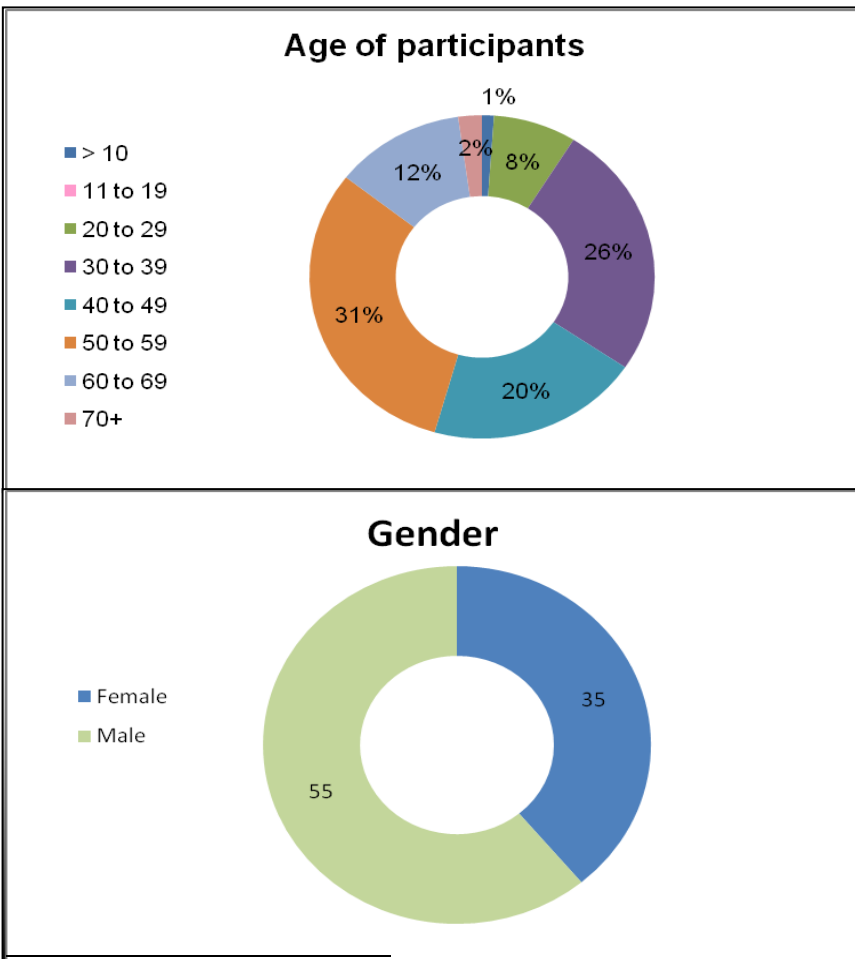
Introduction

One hundred participants completed the online survey and informed ech₂o of their shower habits. Information reported varied; one participant confessed that they regularly shower for an average of 20 minutes. Another divulged that whilst they run the water and wait for the shower to heat up they do the house work. And one person explained that while they wait for the shower to heat up they collect the cold water to use in their garden. Therefore, respondents ranged from water savvy to water wasting.

Objective

The objective of the survey was to be able to create a snapshot of people's average shower habits and gauge their interest in saving water.¹ This was done through determining the frequency and average length of their shower, examining how people perceive their shower length, whether people are willing to reduce their shower time, and if they are using an eco showerhead.

Details of participants



Ninety participants told us about their age. The age of participants ranged from 8 to 70 years old.²

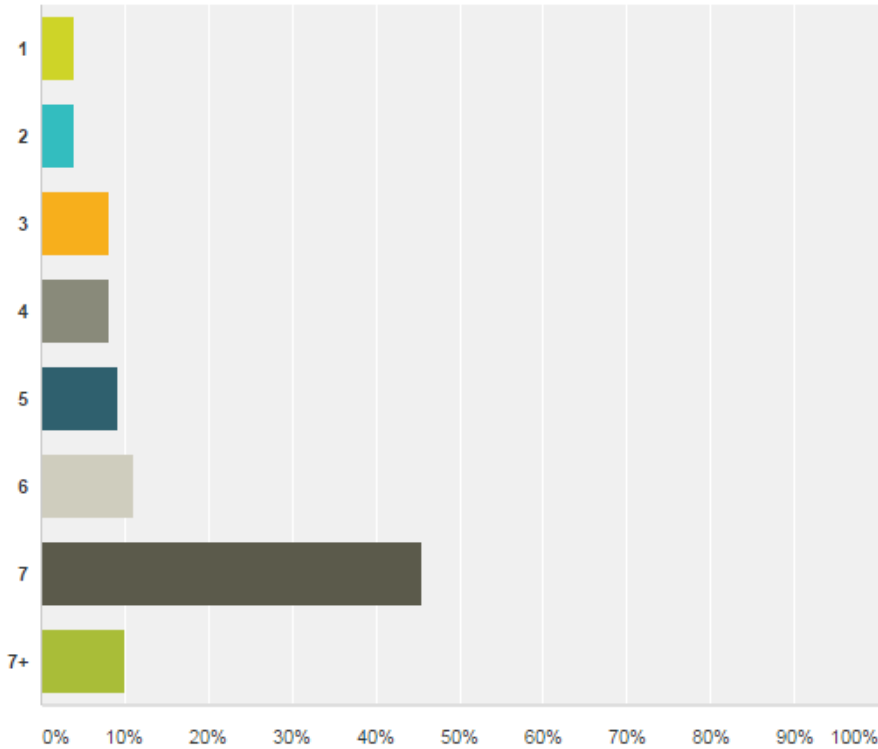
The majority of participants (77%) fall between the ages of 30 to 59 years old, with the largest age bracket being 50 to 59 years old (31%).

Ninety out of 100 people surveyed reported their gender. 39% are female and 61% are male.

¹ Due to how the survey was shared and made available online it is expected that a large number of participants are already interested in water and aware of the need to save water.

² One participant noted their age as 101, though we were not sure if this was a tech savvy centenarian or a typo!!

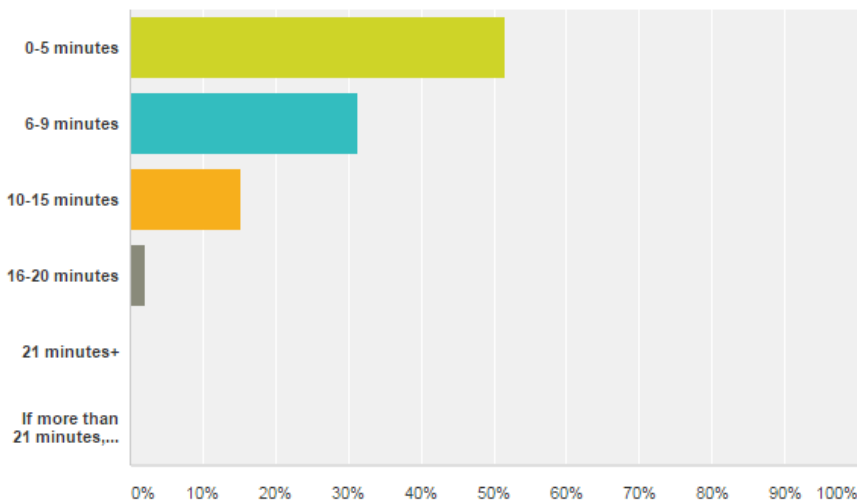
How many times do you shower a week?



Ninety nine participants answered this question. Of those who answered almost half of respondents (45%) have a shower every day. 16% shower less than half of the week. It is expected that some of the people who shower for less than half of the week are also having baths.

Ten percent of people surveyed shower more than once a day. Of these 10 people, three shower nine times a week. Another three regularly take 12 showers a week. And one person showers twice a day, every day.³

How many minutes do you usually take in the shower?



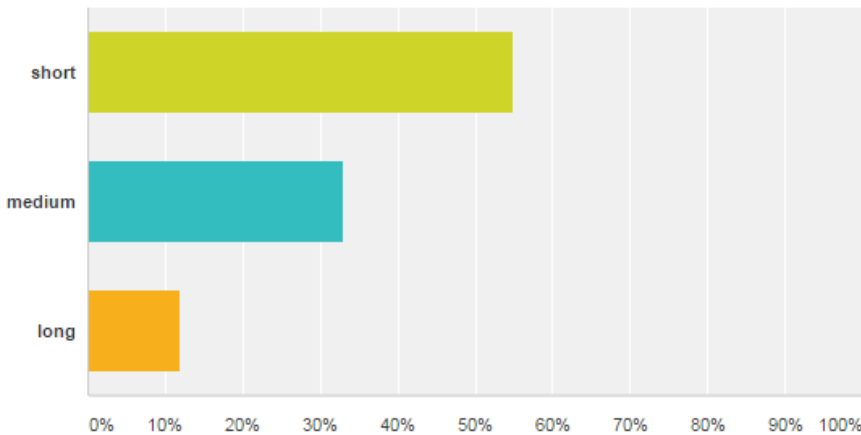
The majority of participants spend less than 10 minutes in the shower (82 people). Half (51%) have short showers, that are five minutes or less. 17 people take a long shower, that is 10 minutes or longer.

Only 8% of participants are adolescents, which are generally thought of as high water users. That might be one factor why the majority have either a medium or short shower.⁴

³ The person who showers on average 14 times a week noted that each shower is for an average of 3 minutes. Therefore, this individual could potentially be using less water than others who shower less frequently.

⁴ As stated in footnote ¹, it is expected that a large number of participants are already interested in water and aware of the need to save it.

Do you think this is a short/medium/long time to spend in the shower?



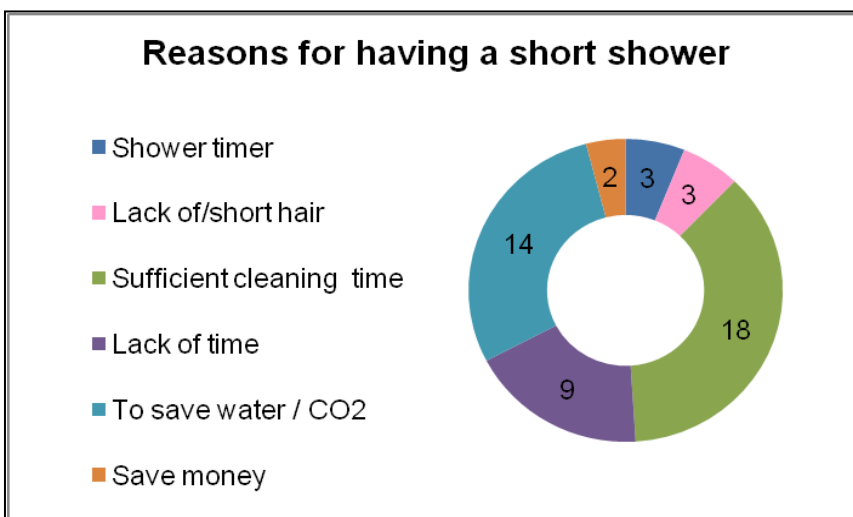
This question proved in part unsuccessful in providing helpful data. This is because a person who showers for longer than 10 minutes might have answered that they think this is a short time to spend in the shower. Answers are isolated so cross referencing is possible but incredibly time consuming.

However, to some extent it could be said people in this survey have reasonably accurate perceptions of their length of shower. As the ratio of perceived short, medium and long shower takers is similar to the length of shower times reported in question two.

Fifty one people reported that they shower for five minutes or less and 55 people believe they take short showers. 31 participants reported that they have a regular shower of 6-10 minutes, and 33 people state that they take medium showers. 17 people told us that they shower for 10 minutes and longer, though only 12 people believe they have a long shower. Therefore, a proportion of participants have a slight misconception of their length of shower.

Tell us about the length of you shower.

Seventy one participants told us about the length of time they spend in the shower. Most people (49) told us why they have a shower for five minutes or less and 22 people told us why they take leisurely showers of 10 minutes and more.



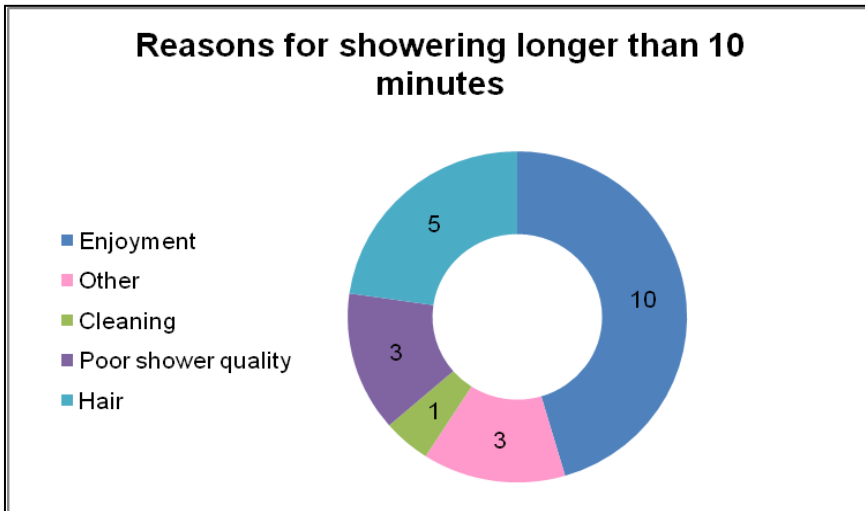
Reasons for participants having short showers, of five minutes or less, are categorised into six motives.

The most common reason is that people believe that five minutes is ample time to wash.

Other reasons included reducing their environmental impact.

One of these people explained that they imagine if they had to carry the water that they need

for a shower, therefore limit their water use to a bucket or two. Another person surveyed admitted that the reason for their short shower is to make up for their daughter's regular 20 minute shower.



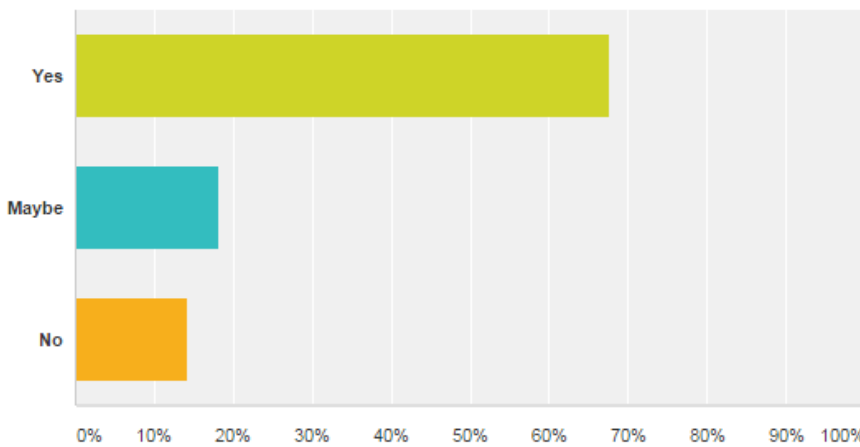
Reasons why the 22 shower users take regular long showers are categorised into five answers: enjoyment of the shower time, cleaning the shower/bath at the same time, poor shower quality, long hair and 'other'.

Under 'other' the reasons were a health condition that prevented moving fast, being 6'4 and claiming that they need more time to wash a larger surface area, and one person stating that they

spend a long time in the shower as that is where they do their best thinking.

One respondent explained that their length of shower varies along with the season, with shorter showers in the summer and long, hot showers in the winter.

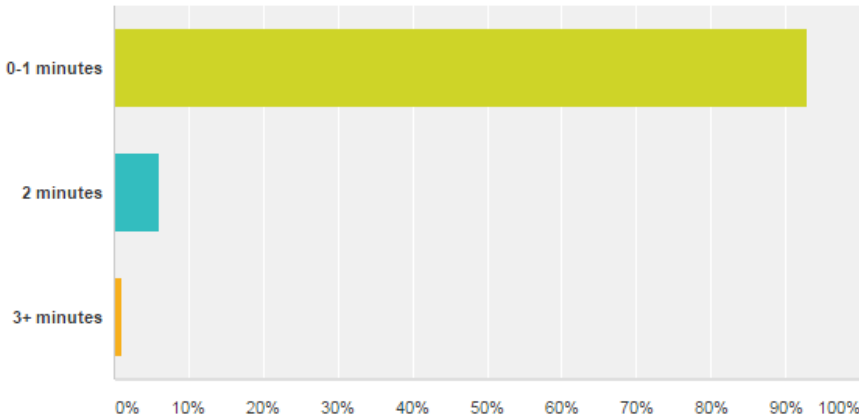
Do you think you could meet the four minute shower challenge?



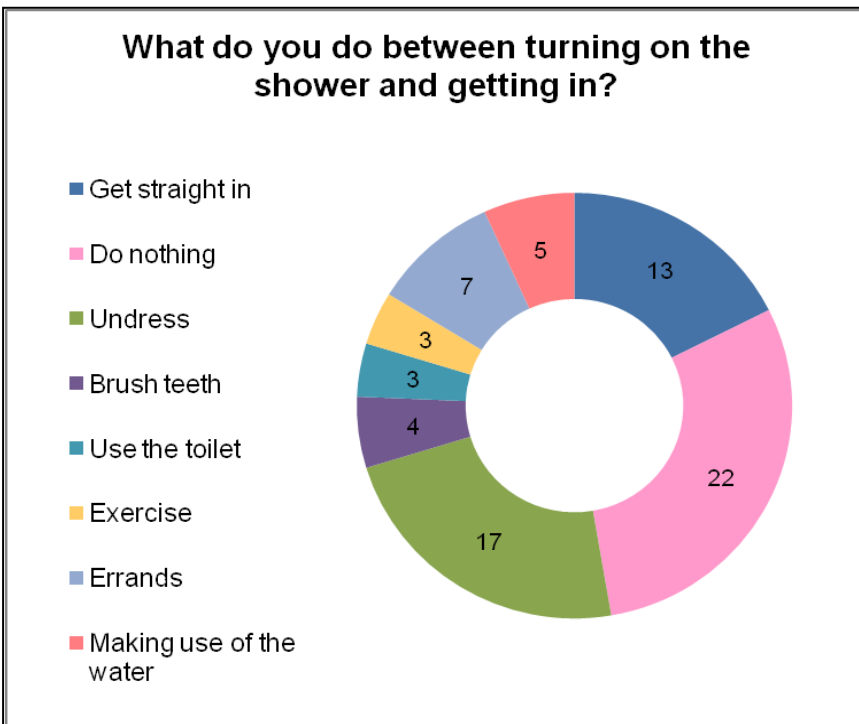
When asked if they thought they could cut their shower time down to four minutes, 67 people said yes. 51 participants reported in question 2 that they shower regularly for five minutes or less. Therefore, a large majority of the 67 people are presumably already meeting the challenge. Though, at least 16% more have decided that they would be willing to reduce their shower time.

18% of people surveyed are undecided if they could reduce their shower time to four minutes and 14% said they could not.

How long do you run the shower before getting in?



The vast majority of people (93%) in the survey run the shower for up to a minute before they get under it. Only seven participants run the shower for longer than a minute before getting in. Of these seven people one person runs the shower for over three minutes.



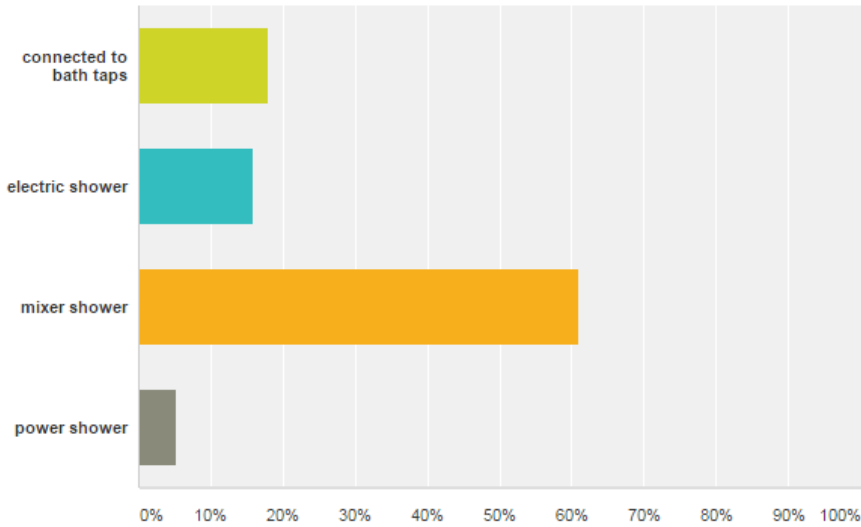
People were asked what they did in this time whilst they waited for the shower to heat up. Answers fell into eight categories: getting straight in and braving the cold water, standing and waiting, undressing, brushing their teeth, using the toilet, exercise, doing errands and making use of the cold water.

There are five people who make use of the cold water as the shower heats up. One collects the water for their garden. The other four clean the bath/shower.

Three people exercise whilst they wait for the shower to become hot. One dances, another lunges and the other does press ups.

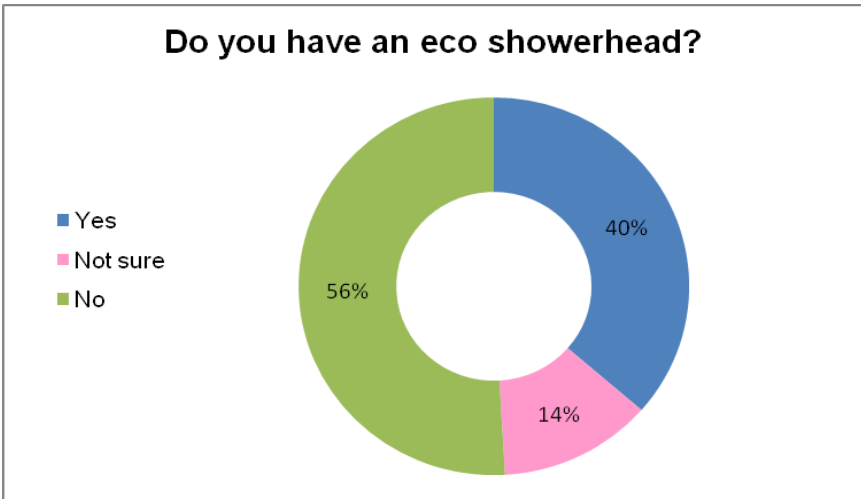
Seven people do errands around the house whilst they wait. One feeds their cat, another trims their beard, one weighs themselves, another organises their towels, and three do house work.

Can you identify your shower type?



Of the 100 participants five people skipped this question. Of the 95 people who answered the majority (58%) have a mixer shower. The next most common is a shower connected to the bath taps (17%). A close third is an electric shower (15%). And the least common shower type in this survey is a power shower (5%).

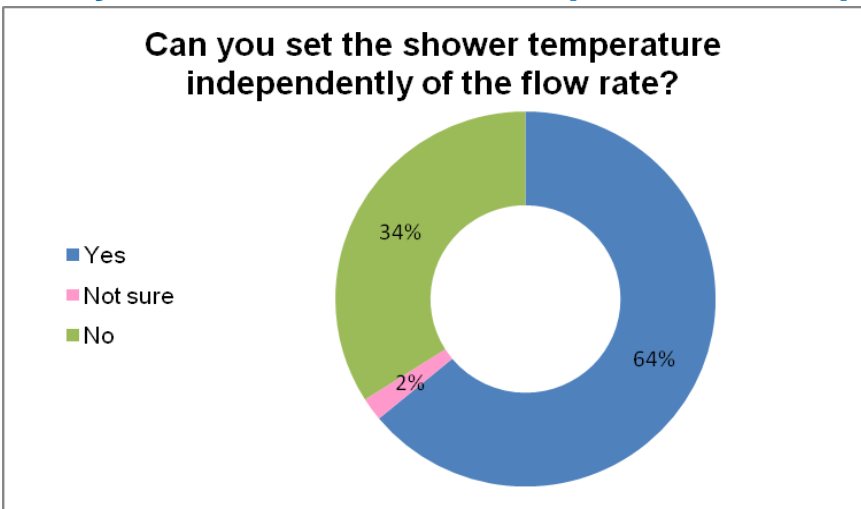
Do you have an eco shower head?



Ninety eight people answered this question. Of these respondents 40% have an eco shower head. 14% of people did not know if they did. Over half did not have one.

Of the people who answered the question below, 64% are able to set the shower temperature independently of the flow rate.

Can you set the shower temperature independently of the flow?



A thermostatic mixer shower allows users to set the shower temperature independently of the flow rate, which means that when the shower is turned off and on it sustains the same temperature. This reduces the need to fiddle with taps, which provides the opportunity to turn the flow of water off during a shower to soap up before turning the water back on to rinse, thereby minimising an individual's water use.

Would you consider turning the shower off when you soap up?



When asked, 'would you consider turning the shower off when you soap up?' 69 people answered. 16% of these are already doing this, 19% do this sometimes, 7% think it is a good idea, 16% said they would consider it and 42% said they would not do this.

Of the 29 people who said no not only three people indicated that they have tried it.

Whereas, the majority simply do not like the idea. Opinions

ranged from, 'this is a silly idea', 'I would rather shower once a week', and to most people explaining they did not like the idea of being cold when the water was turned off.

Summary

100 participants shared their shower habits in this survey. The majority of participants (73 people) were aged between 30 – 59 years old. It was discovered that almost half of respondents (45%) have a shower every day. The majority of participants spend less than 10 minutes in the shower (82 people). With half of participants (51%) having short showers, that are five minutes or less.

Over half of short shower users gave the reason as wanting to save water and energy or because they consider five minutes to be sufficient time to get clean. The most common reason for people who take a long shower, of 10 minutes or more, is due to the enjoyment of being in the shower.

Over half of respondents believe they could meet the four minute shower challenge and of these there are at least 16 people who would have to reduce their shower time to do this.

The majority of people surveyed run their shower for no longer than a minute before getting in. Whilst waiting for the shower to heat up most people either undress or simply stand waiting.

The most common shower type in this survey is a mixer shower (58%). 40% of people have an eco shower head. 64% of people surveyed are able to set the shower temperature independently of the flow rate, allowing the temperature to be sustained during short periods of being turned off. 24 people turn the shower off when lathering up, either every time they shower or sometimes. 42% of people would not consider saving water through turning off the flow to soap up before rinsing off. The main reason for this amongst participants is that it would decrease their comfort, as most perceived they would become cold.

The main barrier discovered in this survey to people to taking short showers is, that long shower users are people who take enjoyment from spending time in the shower. As a result, people were found to be reluctant to reduce their shower time to the example of four minutes, as well as turning off the water to soap up, as this would decrease the satisfaction of a shower.

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