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New Abu Dhabi buildings get water-saving taps

These new faucets reduce consumption up to 70 per cent

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Image Credit: Abdul Rahman/Gulf News

These efficient taps, installed in new construction projects in Abu Dhabi, save up to 70 per cent water compared to conventional taps.

Abu Dhabi: Taps installed in new buildings in Abu Dhabi save up to about 70 per cent of water compared to conventional taps, a senior official has said.

The new taps comply with regulations of Estidama (Arabic for sustainability), a programme designed by Abu Dhabi Urban Planning Council specifically for the hot climate and arid environment in the region.

Estidama's Pearl Rating System is a framework for sustainable design, construction and operation of buildings.

The new taps will help reduce Abu Dhabi's per capita water consumption rate, which is the highest in the world, Humaid Al Hammadi, associate planner, Abu Dhabi Urban Planning Council (UPC), told Gulf News in an interview recently.

The average per capita water consumption in Abu Dhabi is 550 litres per day whereas the global average is 350 litres, he pointed out.

The Estidama-compliant water taps have a flow rate of five to seven litres per minute whereas conventional water taps discharge 20 litres per minute, Al Hammadi explained.

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He said Estidama-compliant products use water efficiently without the need for people to compromise on their lifestyle.

Part of requirements

Water saving taps are part of the requirements of the Estidama programme which insists on several other measures to save water and energy, Al Hammadi said.

"The programme addresses the major issues of water scarcity in the region," he added.

Even if the minimum requirements of the programme (Pearl Rating) are complied with, it will save an overall 41 per cent of energy and 21 per cent of water in the long run, he said.

About the impact the programme has already made on the high carbon foot print of the emirate, he said: "You can't expect to see the results of such a programme tomorrow or the day after."

The programme was initiated last year and most of the projects under it are in design and construction stages, he said. When they are operational, the results will show, Al Hammadi added.

"We believe in the [Arabic] proverb 'it is too late to dig a well when you are hungry'. So lets start it today," he said.

The Estidama-compliant design minimises the cost of maintenance also, apart from those of utilities.

Water meters

"We encourage developers to install water meters also to gauge consumption, but it is not mandatory and they get incentives for it," Al Hammadi said.

He added that regulations about existing buildings were being worked upon by the UPC but people were welcome to implement the measures at their homes.

Drive for compliance

Estidama-compliant water and energy saving techniques are being implemented in several new construction projects including 1924 villas, 15 schools and several other buildings.

Of the 88 projects planned under the Estidama programme in the emirate, 53 have been approved and rest are under the approval process, said Humaid Al Hammadi, associate planner, Abu Dhabi Urban Planning Council.

One Pearl Rating is mandatory for private projects but the government projects require a higher rating — 2 Pearl. The higher the rating the more will be the mandatory requirements.

Being government projects, the 1924 villas require a 2 Pearl rating and the 15 schools of the Abu Dhabi Education Council require a 3 Pearl rating, he said.

Completed projects include Shaikh Zayed Desert Learning Centre and the Imperial College of London buildings in Al Ain.

In figures

- Per capital water consumption in Abu Dhabi: 550 litre per day
- Global average: 350 litre per day
- Estidama-compliant water taps use 5-7 litres per minute
- Conventional water taps use 20 litres per minute
- 70% water savings by Estidama-compliant water taps
- 41% energy to be saved by Estidama regulations
- 21% water to be saved by the regulations
- 1,924 villas and 15 schools being constructed under the programme

URL: <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/uae/environment/new-abu-dhabi-buildings-get-water-saving-taps-1.954489>

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Does anyone know where these taps can be purchased? Like everyone I am keen to save water and therefore money! Thanks

Anonymous, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

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