

## **Water and Sewer Billing**

Water and sewer billings are issued quarterly (4 times per year) for residential and non-residential accounts. The billings are based on water consumed as registered on your water meter. The water meter can be read directly by the Municipality's contractor from outside the home by touching equipment to an outdoor reading device which is connected to the meter in your basement.



## **Moving/Renting**

If you are moving, please contact the Municipality to arrange a final water meter reading and final billing. This will ensure that you are not held responsible for any consumption by the new owner and reduces issues between the buyer and the seller. There is a fee for processing your final water bill, please refer to the Fee Bylaw for the current charge.

If you are renting your home to a tenant, please be aware that the Municipality of Dutton Dunwich holds the owner of the property responsible for the water account. A tenant security deposit of \$100 is required by the tenant prior to water connection.

## **Meter Readings**

The Municipality's meters installed in all properties register accurate water consumption. The meter reading is much like the odometer in your car; we read it each time and bill the difference from the last billed reading.

## **Water Arrears**

The Municipality of Dutton Dunwich can add the outstanding water and wastewater accounts to the tax bill for the property that was receiving the supply of the water. They may be added to taxes when they are in arrears or if the account is inactive.

Please refer to the Water and Wastewater Billing and Collection Policy.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Why do I have to pay water and sewer charges when I paid for the installation years ago?**

The initial charges you paid years ago to have the service installed are called Frontage Charges. They covered your share of the initial construction costs to run the water and sanitary sewer systems across the front of your property.

The Usage Charges cover the cost of operating the water or sanitary sewer system (including treatment) and is based on your usage.

The Service Charges are a flat rate that recover the fixed costs of providing you with the service.

Both your "Usage" and "Service" charges help pay for the on-going costs of providing you with water and sewer services.

## **Why are my Sanitary Sewer Charges higher than my Water Charges?**

It is more-costly to treat sewage than to treat water. Dutton Dunwich is committed to ensuring that all waste water returning to the environment meets or exceeds the legislated level of purity.

## **Why should I pay a sewer usage charge for water I used to water my lawn or fill my pool?**

The most accurate way to measure sanitary sewer use would be a sanitary sewage meter. Unfortunately, there is no practical, accurate, cost-effective small sewage meter. An alternative and accurate method is to apply a sanitary sewer surcharge on the individual customer's water usage.

We understand that many customers will water their lawn, fill a pool or wash the car over the summer months. Many customers initially feel that we should reduce sewer costs to account for this type of usage. However, the volume of waste in the sanitary sewer system is actually higher than the amount of water supplied to our customers. That is, we are getting more water back to our treatment plants than we are actually pumping out of our water plants.

This is primarily due to infiltration (where water seeps into the sanitary sewer through cracks in the underground pipes, joints, manhole covers etc). Although infiltration is not desirable, it is unavoidable. Since infiltration occurs underground, it is not possible to attribute and charge specific customers for it.

## **What is the Final Meter Read / New Connection charge?**

This charge is assessed to help recover the administrative costs associated with 'setting up' and 'closing' your account, such as meter readings and the gathering, processing and inputting of account information.

## **Why is my bill so high?**

The three most common reasons for a high bill are:

- Plumbing Problems

If previous bills were based on actual meter readings, then there is a possibility that you have plumbing problems.

Did you know that the water meter can help you detect if you have a plumbing problem? It's true. If you have a meter which measures water flow in cubic metres, check to see if there is a small red dial on the face of the meter (diamond shaped). This is a very sensitive dial, which will rotate once for every 1/58 gallon of water used. If this dial is moving when you are not using water, chances are that you have a plumbing problem. This could be costly!

- Seasonal Usage

Normally, usage is higher during the summer months due to lawn watering, car washing, and swimming pool maintenance.

- User Habits

Each individual customer has a unique usage pattern. Your usage could be above the norm.

The best way to avoid high billings is to monitor your private meter readings. That way you can see if your consumption is increasing and be able to identify any possible plumbing issues.



## The Major Culprit Is...?

A faulty toilet is one of the most common sources of undetected leaks. Toilet related plumbing problems have caused water and sanitary sewer bills in excess of \$1000. Most toilet leaks occur at the **overflow pipe** or at the **flapper valve** inside the tank. The following paragraphs provide some ways that will help you determine if you have a toilet leak.



### Overflow Pipe

Remove the lid of the toilet tank. If the water level inside the tank is too high, water could be running down the overflow pipe. You can prevent this from happening by ensuring that the water level is at least 1 cm below the top of the overflow pipe.

### Flapper Tests

Add food colouring to the toilet tank. Do not flush the toilet. If, after 15 minutes, the colouring appears in the toilet bowl, this indicates that there is a leak from the tank. If no colouring appears in the bowl, remember to check the tank to ensure that the food colouring did not completely drain from the bowl and into the sewer system.

If you do not have food colouring, close the shut off valve to the toilet. Mark the water level inside the tank. Do not flush the toilet for a couple of hours. If the level of the water has dropped, this indicates that there is a leak from the tank.

Shining a flashlight on the inside wall of the toilet bowl helps you to see if water is running from the tank to the bowl.

Decorative toilet tank covers may prevent the handle of the toilet from returning, causing water to run continuously.

That "hissing" sound you hear may be water running from the tank of the toilet to the bowl. Keep in mind, however, that you may not hear a water leak!

The toilet is not supposed to continue to 'run' after the flushing cycle is completed and the tank has refilled.

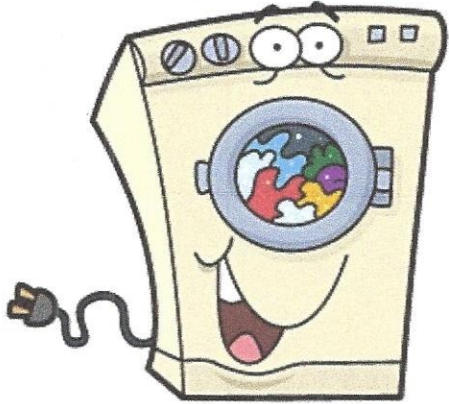
### Watch Out For...

- Leaky taps - be sure to replace worn washers
- Outside taps - turn them off completely after use and if you are going to be **away** for an extended period of time, turn off the taps from inside your home
- Underground leaks in lawn sprinkler system

**Save water, protect your home and the environment!**



## Year-round water saving ideas for the home



- Install water-efficient toilets, low-flow showerheads and faucet aerators in your kitchen, bathrooms and laundry room.
- Keep a jug of drinking water in the fridge to avoid waiting for cold running water.
- If you have a dishwasher, only wash full loads and use the energy saver or shortest cycle.
- Whether you are preparing food or brushing your teeth, never let the tap run continuously.
- Fix leaky taps and toilets.
- Use a high-efficiency front loading washing machine, and run only full loads.

## Seasonal tips for the spring

### Gardening

- Disconnect your downspout and use the rainwater to water your grass and gardens. No extra watering required during the spring, the rain is enough.
- Install a rain barrel and use the rainwater to water your grass and gardens.
- Sharpen your lawn mower blades.
- Aerate your lawn to let it breathe. This will also reduce thatch build-up.
- Repair your lawn by over-seeding
- Apply 5 - 8 cm (2" - 3 inches) of mulch to your gardens.
- Sweep sidewalks and driveways clean instead of using a running hose.

### Basement flooding prevention

- Clear eavestroughs and downspouts of debris.
- Ensure the ground is sloping away from your home's foundation walls.
- Seal window wells and fix leaks in basement walls and around windows.

### Car washing

The dirt on cars can contain toxic chemicals, heavy metals, oil and grease. When you wash a car in your driveway or on the street, that dirty water runs into the storm sewers and straight into local waterways, contributing to water pollution.

## Seasonal tips for the summer

- Early bird gets the worm - water lawns early in the morning to reduce water lost to evaporation.
- Slow down the sprinkler! And let water soak in to your lawn. If water is running off your lawn, it's time to stop.
- Disconnect downspouts from the sewer system and use rainwater for grass and gardens. Make the job easier with a rain barrel.



**MUNICIPALITY OF DUTTON/ DUNWICH**  
 Handy tips to conserve water  
 Fix leaky toilets A.S.A.P  
 Only do full loads of laundry  
 Take shorter showers  
 519.762.2204

**MUNICIPALITY OF SOUTHWOLD TOWNSHIP**  
 Handy tips to conserve water  
 Install energy efficient taps & showerheads  
 Repair even the smallest of leaks  
 Water plants & lawns only when necessary  
 519.769.2010

**Water costs money... don't waste it!**  
 A dripping faucet or fixture can waste 3 gallons a day... a total of 1095 gallons a year.

**Conserve Water and Save Money!**  
 A reminder from your local water utility where we're dedicated to quality and service.

**Waste per quarter at 60 psi water pressure**

Diameter of stream	Gallons	Cubic Feet	Cubic Meters
1/4"	1,181,500	158,000	4,475
3/16"	666,000	89,031	2,521
1/8"	296,000	39,400	1,115
1/16"	74,000	9,850	280

A continuous leak from a hole this size would, over a three month period, waste water in the amounts shown above.



*Use a brush, washcloth, or sponge for scrubbing instead of a stream of water.*



*Take a short shower.*

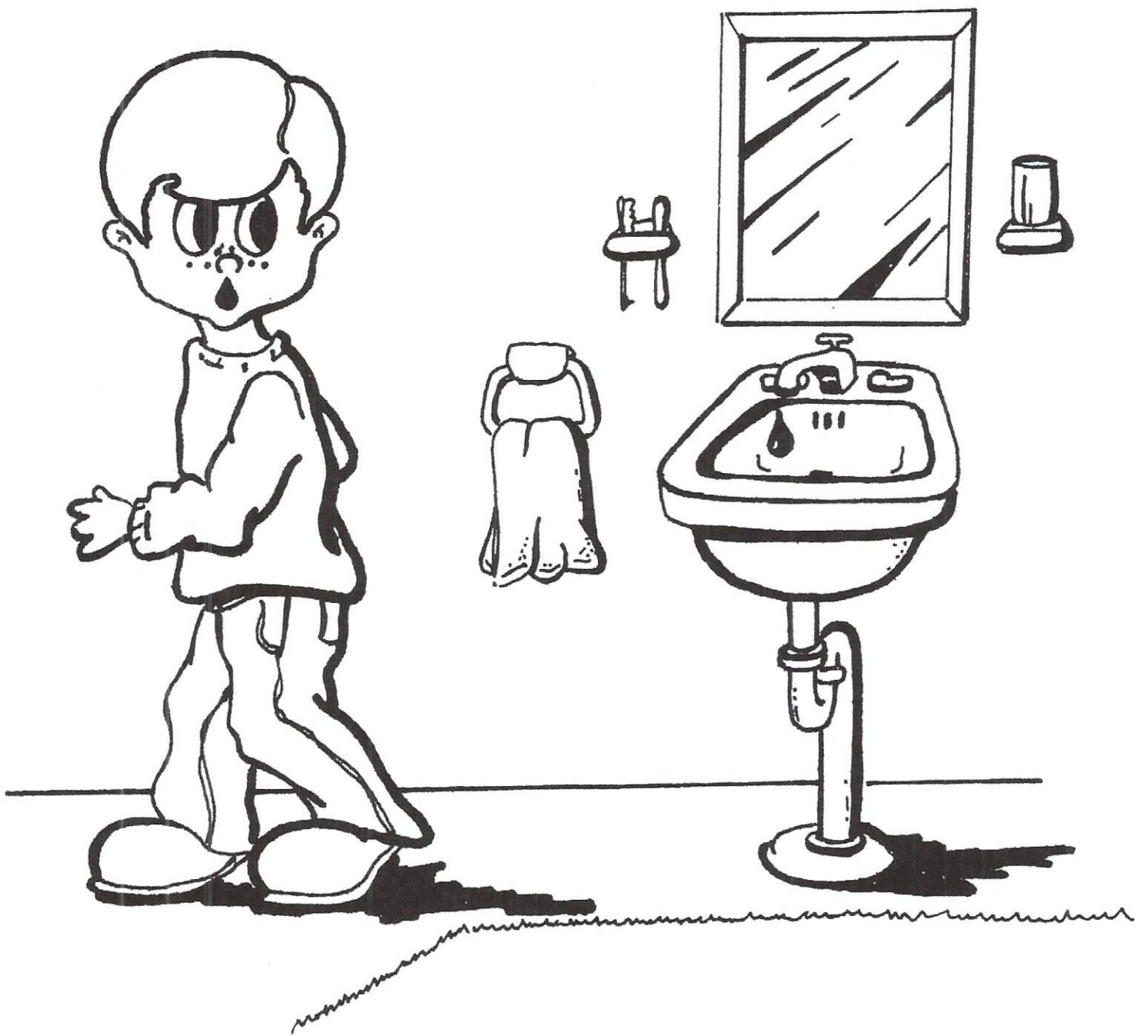


Sweep sidewalks and driveways instead of washing them.

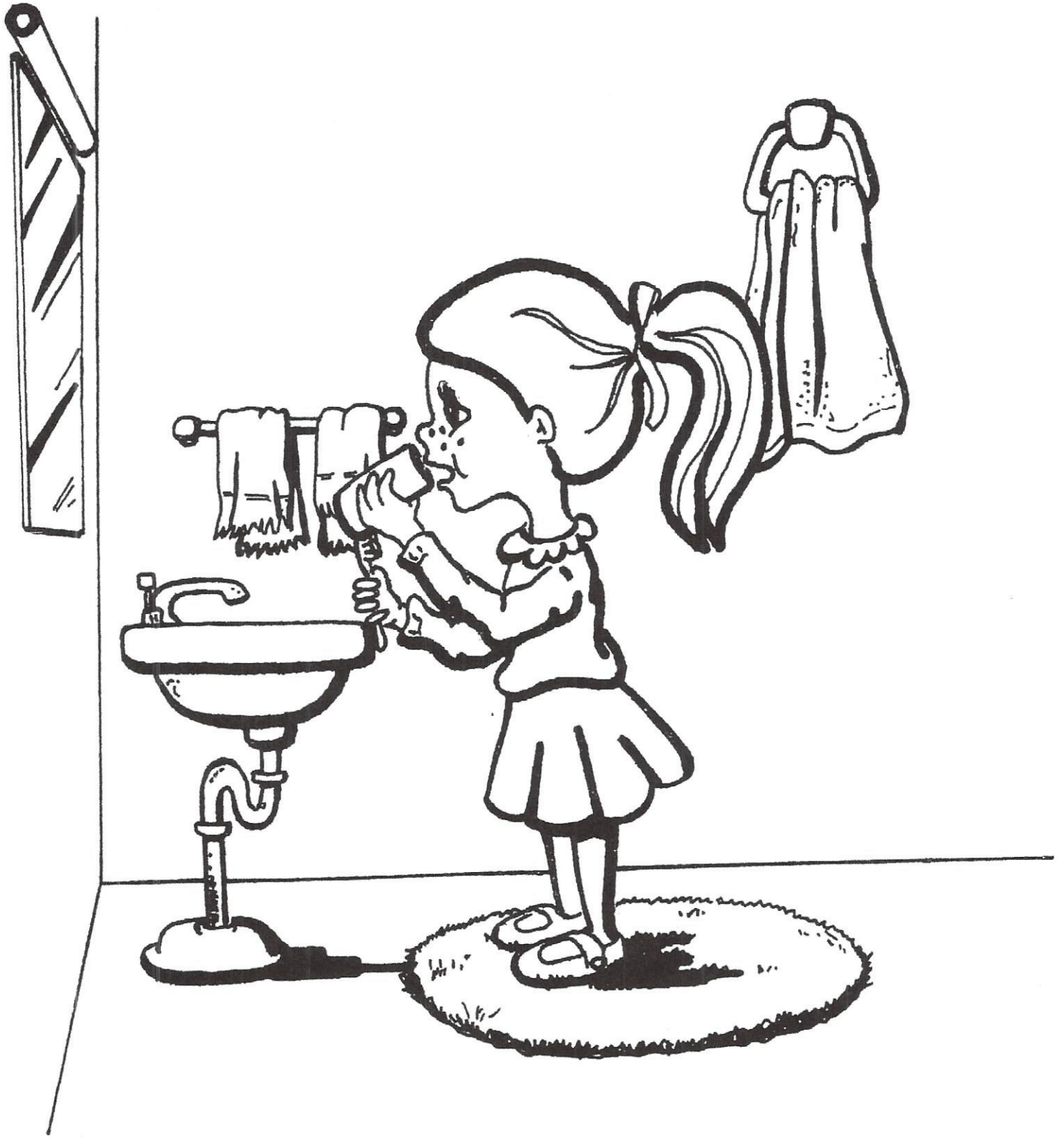




*Turn the water off while you brush. Turn it on only to rinse.*



*Listen for leaky faucets and turn off drips.*

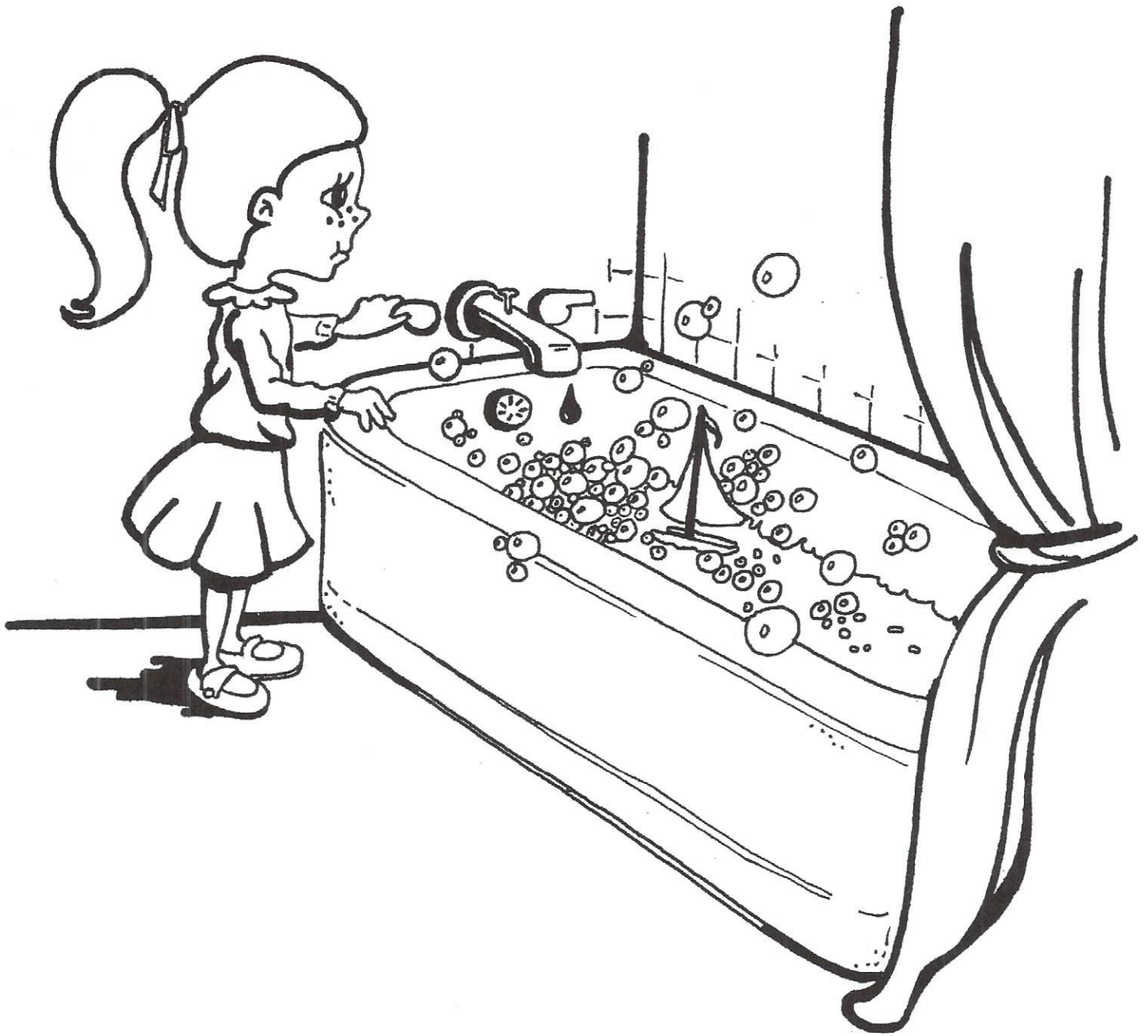


*Rinse your mouth with water from a cup instead of leaving the faucet turned on.*





*Remind your parents to store grease or oil in a container instead of washing it down the drain.*



Use less water in your bath. Every inch of water you don't put in the tub saves five gallons!