

The Importance of the Water Industry

By Jacey Nelson

Water is crucial for life. Every living thing on Earth requires water to survive. Water is vital for our environment and for sustaining life. Water is critical for our country's manufacturing, for heating and cooling, transportation, public health, and agriculture. It's also necessary for keeping our businesses running smoothly and meeting our nation's energy needs. We need to make a serious effort to take care of this resource, and as its conservation is essential for our future security and survival.

Water is used to grow our food and to manufacture our favorite food items. Agriculture is the leading consumer of the planet's finite water resource. About 70% of the world's fresh water is used to produce the food we eat. My dad is a farmer and having a reliable water supply is essential for his farm. Farmers use water for many of their operations. The quality of the water is very important with his chemical applications and spraying. With our growing population, it puts more pressure on farmers to use water efficiently and increase productivity to have an adequate food supply. The water industry also allows farmers and ranchers water to irrigate their crops. Irrigation can be used for many types of crops, but corn is the one most irrigated here. We also use it to water our gardens and plants in the greenhouses.

The livestock and animals on the farm need access to fresh, clean drinking water daily. Water for a dairy cow in production is about 40 gallons of water a day, and beef cattle require 8-20 gallons per day. Our chickens consume about one gallon per bird per day. The barns and equipment need to be washed down to prevent disease.

The water industry is crucial because it supplies clean water for all of us to drink. Water is a daily necessity. It's important for preventing disease and maintaining hygiene. We often go about our lives taking our safe water supply for granted. Water is probably our most valuable but overlooked resource. Maintaining the quality and quantity of our water is essential if we are going to meet the water demands in our community and for our environment.

I am very thankful that North Dakota has a water industry that allows us to have safe drinking water and water for all the daily activities that take place in our homes, schools, medical facilities, and businesses.