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## UAE | Environment

# Stiffer fines for wasting water in Dubai homes next year

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Number of water-related offences has fallen by 30 per cent from 2012 but further efforts are necessary, official says

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Throwing water on the street after washing vehicles is an offence that carries a Dh100 fine.

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Dubai: Wasting water while carrying out household chores may no longer incur just a slap on the wrist, as authorities intend to implement stricter fines on home owners by early next year.

Currently, the UAE's water consumption per capita is 550 litres per day, which is higher than the global average of 170-300 litres per day.

To tackle the waste of water in the city, Dubai Municipality is currently revising the rules and regulations and aims to also introduce new rules to tackle the issue.

"Within the first quarter of 2014, we will have a list of revised and updated rules to further reduce the number of violations," Abdul Majeed Saifaie, director of Dubai Municipality's Waste Management Department, told *Gulf News* yesterday.

Even though the number of water-related offences has fallen by 30 per cent from 491 in 2012 to 378 in 2013, Saifaie explained that they want to further reduce that number to zero by implementing stricter fines and penalties.

"There have been instances where municipal inspectors had to either directly notify owners of private villas or issue them a written warning because there was a great deal of water spilled out on the streets when having their cars washed, or when their garden was watered. We are trying to readdress the situation now," he said.

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Saifaie pointed out that some fines will either be reduced or increased, and there will also be several new rules. "It is still under revision, but our objective in the changes is not due to monetary [benefits] but for educational and awareness purposes," he said.

Fines for wasting water range from Dh100 to Dh100,000.

According to the current fines, residents will be fined Dh100 for a leakage of air condition water on the pavement or road, flushing vehicle washing water in places not specified by the concerned authorities, and a Dh200 fine for dropping any solid or liquid waste from vehicles on the roads.

"No matter how good of a water source the country has, we all have to play our part in reducing consumption, and we are trying to control such negative behaviour," Saifaie said.

To further combat water wastage, the Federal Electricity and Water Authority (Fewa) is also carrying out its energy conservation campaign that will be carried out until 2016. As part of its initiative to save water, Fewa intends to raise the tariff of water and electricity by 15 per cent on January 1, 2014.

The Dubai Electricity and Water Authority advises residents to save water by washing their cars with a bucket of soapy water and use a nozzle to stop the flow of water from the hose between rinsing. Driveways and sidewalks should be cleaned with a broom instead of the hose, and people should check for leaks in outdoor faucets, pipes and hoses.