Toyota Observes World Water Day

March 22, 2023

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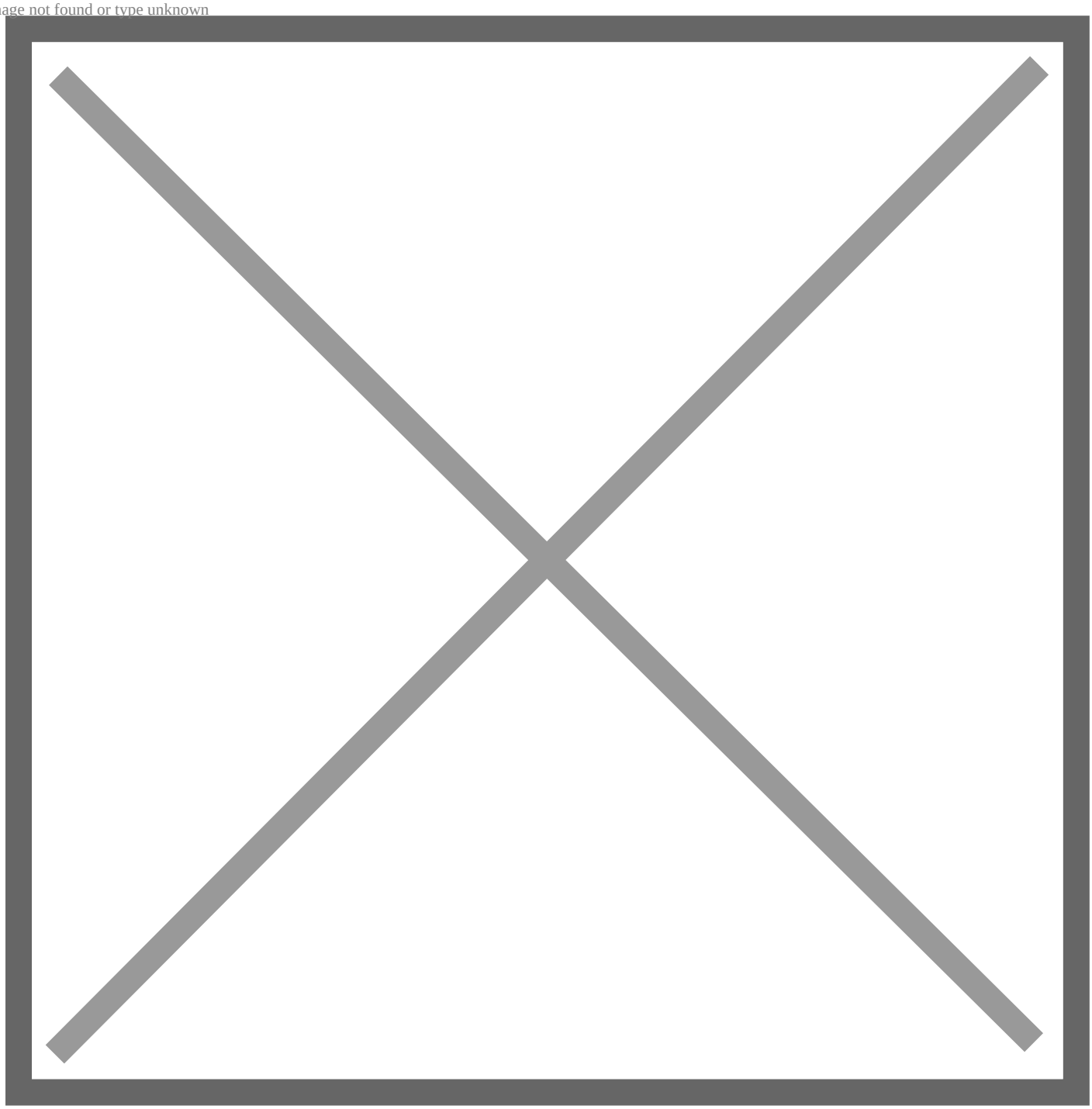
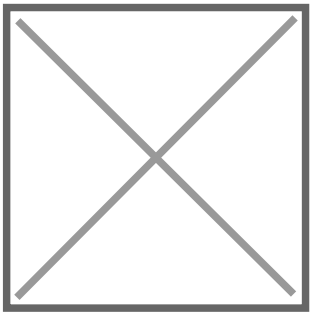


What is World Water Day?

March 22 is the United Nations (UN) World Water Day, an initiative to encourage a renewed focus from all of us to do our part for water. World Water Day supports the bold water vision of UN Sustainable Development Goal Number 6: “Clean Water and Sanitation for All by 2030.”

Although World Water Day is celebrated every year, in 2023 the UN launches a Water Action Agenda at the UN 2023 Water Conference – the first event like this for nearly 50 years. The theme is to accelerate change to solve the water and sanitation crisis. As this issue affects us all, we all need to take action.



The hummingbird is the icon for this year’s World Water Day: **Be the Change You Want to See in the World**. The story of the hummingbird originated with the Quechua people in Peru. The hummingbird flew to get small drops of water to help put out a forest fire, despite the skepticism of other animals that this would make a difference. But the hummingbird approached the problem one drop at a time and did what she could. She was being the change she wanted to see in the world.

Why is Water an Important Issue?

Water is crucial to all forms of life now and in our future. In many ways, the value of water is infinite, since life cannot exist without it and it has no replacement. The United Nations recognizes the right to safe, clean, accessible and affordable drinking water and sanitation as a universal human right, acknowledging that clean drinking water and sanitation are essential to the realization of all human rights.

Globally, 72% of all water is used by agriculture, 16% by municipalities for households and services, and 12% by industry. Demand for water has grown about 1% each year since 1980 and is projected to continue to increase.

Water also has a cultural value. For some indigenous communities, water is considered a living entity with the same rights as human beings – its value is therefore priceless. The Lakota phrase “Mní wi?hóni” means “Water is life.” To Native Americans, water not only sustains life – it is sacred.

But fresh water is scarce and becoming scarcer. More than 2 billion people already live in areas subject to water stress, while 3.4 billion people – 45% of the global population – do not have access to safely managed sanitation facilities. Scientists project that the world will face a global water deficit of 40% by 2030.

Water quality is also deteriorating. Globally, more than 80% of wastewater flows back into the environment without being treated or reused. This situation has been made worse by global challenges such as COVID-19 and climate change.

The water challenge is serious and urgent. Rising demand for water and deteriorating water quality generate cascading negative environmental impacts like water scarcity, flooding, pollution, and loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services. They also generate negative social impacts, like social conflict, population migration and even war. And there are negative business impacts, too, like higher operating costs, supply chain disruption,

water supply disruption, and constraint to growth and brand damage.

Toyota's Commitment to Water Stewardship

Companies are expected to play a significant role in achieving the bold and transformative steps urgently needed to shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path. Toyota is committed to doing our part to ensure sustainable water use.

Toyota recognizes the importance of water and it is one of our four environmental sustainability focus areas. Our water strategy emphasizes water stewardship, defined as use of water that is socially equitable, environmentally sustainable and economically beneficial, achieved through a stakeholder-inclusive process that involves site- and watershed-based actions. And this strategy also supports the UN Sustainable Development Goal #6: Clean Water and Sanitation for All.

BOX: TOYOTA'S WATER STRATEGY SUPPORTS THE UN SDG ON CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION FOR ALL

Our water stewardship efforts support the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal #6, on Clean Water and Sanitation for All.

– FIND OUT MORE.

Our Contributions to the Water Solution

Our projects focus on our own actions in our operations to conserve water as well as our actions with our supply chain and environmental groups to protect water quality.

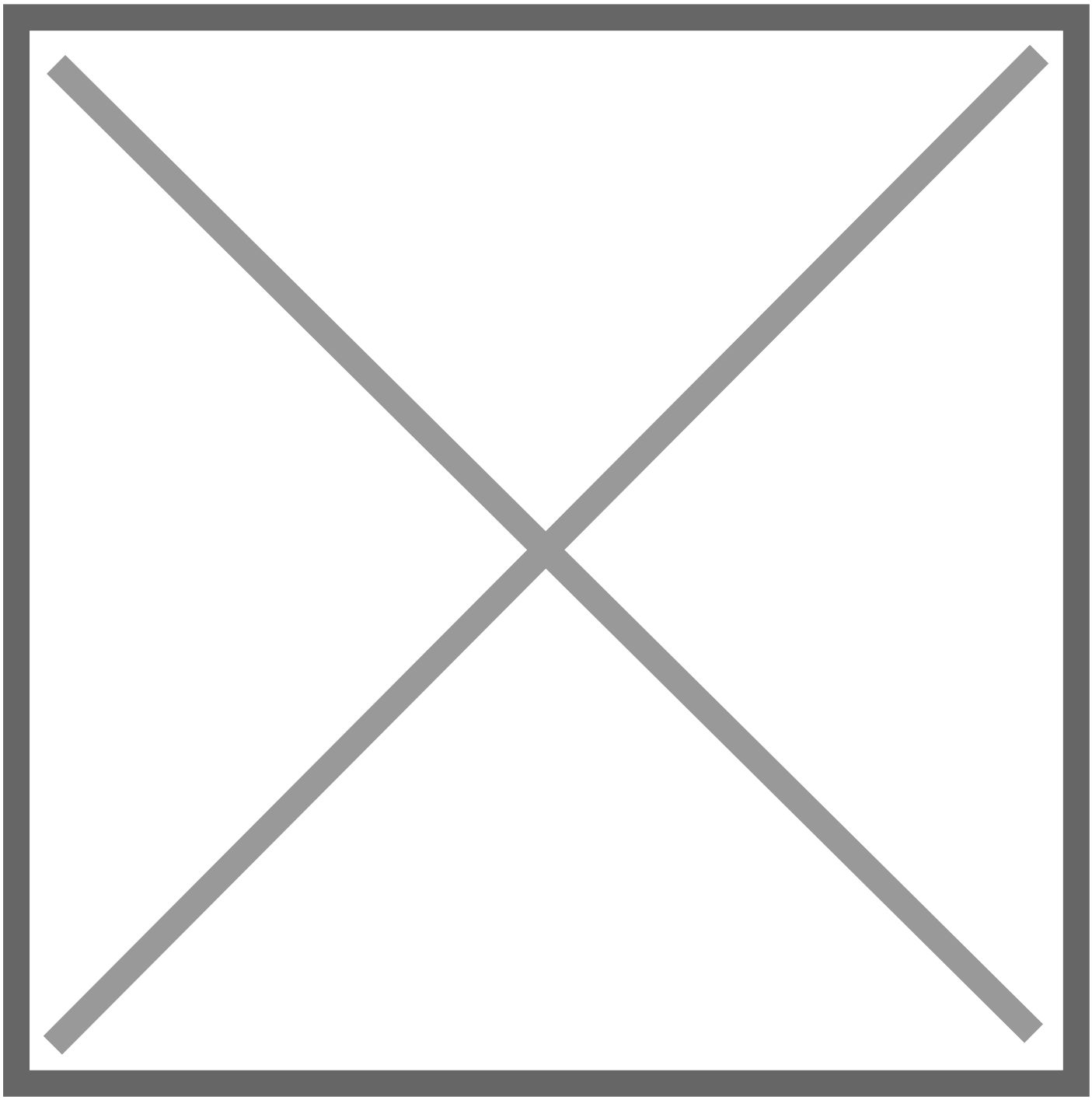
Reduce: Toyota's assembly plant in Indiana is expanding. New conservation actions resulted in a 75% reduction in freshwater use and saved an estimated 54.3 million gallons of freshwater per year. That's equal to the amount needed to supply drinking water to the entire state of Indiana for one month!

Reuse: Toyota's assembly plant in Baja California, Mexico, is one of a handful of Toyota sites around the world identified by the company as being at high risk for water availability. The plant invested in a membrane bio reactor to remove solids from water that has already been used in the manufacturing process. The filtered water is then run through a reverse osmosis system to eliminate any dissolved solids. The plant can reuse this water multiple times, which saves an estimated 23 million gallons of water annually.

Restore: Toyota supports community efforts to educate individuals and families about water conservation and the importance of protecting water quality. These activities help scale up conservation efforts and make positive outcomes more impactful. One of these projects has been in The State of Baja California in Mexico, which draws water from the Colorado River Estuary. With Toyota's support, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) worked with local partners, cities, and the agricultural sector, to permanently protect over16,100 acres of wetlands along the Hardy River, the lower Colorado River and the Colorado River Estuary.

Reach Out: Water use in our supply chain far exceeds what we use in our operations. Toyota's Green Supplier Requirements and Dealership Environmental Excellence Program set clear requirements and high expectations for positive environmental performance, especially to reduce water usage and water discharge. Our updated Green Supplier Requirements include a new requirement for suppliers to track water withdrawal, discharge and consumption volumes and to develop water reduction plans and targets. Dealers participating in our DEEP program are achieving an average of 7% reduction in water use – among a range of other environmental benefits.

You Can Help!

Everyone can play a part to protect water-related ecosystems. Like the hummingbird, we can all choose to step forward and do what we can.

You can conserve water by planting a tree or creating a raingarden. You can save water while taking a shower or washing dishes. You can avoid polluting water by not putting waste, oils or medicines into the toilet or drains. You can help in your own and other communities by organizing or participating in a cleanup project for rivers or oceans, or by donating your time or money to an organization that supports water sanitation in a lower income region.