

WATER CONSERVATION

Here's a way to save it.

Disposables.

Yes, paper and plastic single used cups, plates and other food service utensils.

They're a source of water because they don't use it. Unused water is *found* water when every drop counts.

Over the years this source has been tapped by many communities hit by different kinds of emergencies. From northern California during its severe droughts several years ago to the Mt. St. Helens area recently, public officials and citizens have turn to disposables as a way of saving water while at the same time helping to ensure sanitation levels.

Example: In a memo last year to food service establishments near Mt. St. Helens in Washington state, the Health Officer of one affected district listed this as the number one point in a series of actions available if water shortages continue or worsen.

"Utilize disposable cups, glasses, tableware as much as possible"

Disposables are used by one persons, then discarded. This means no dishwashing at a time of spreading water shortages, deepening water emergencies.

Water shortages – and water contamination, too are no longer a local or regional but a national matter. Water tables and reservoir levels are dropping in many parts of the country as deman pressures rise and Nature plays unpredictable games with rainfall.

The United States Water Resources Council projects that in practically all of the nation's 21 water regions there will be shortages or water quality problems (or both) by the year 2000.

According to National Sanitation Foundation, serving a counter or cafeteria lunch involves the use of approximately 1.3 gallons of water per person. About 55 percent of this is for dishwashing.

Those are 71.5 percent saved when disposables are used.

Further, people in their homes save a minimum of 12 gallons of water each time they don't run the dishwasher.

In this day of water crisis, paper and plastics single service items can play an important role in conservation efforts. Public officials are in a position to encourage the use of disposables-in restaurants and at home-when emergency conditions warrant this as matter of policy.

At the same time that they conserve water, disposables promote sanitation and safety, provide convenience, are environmentally sound, and save energy. The energy saved by eliminating dishwashing is greater than the energy used in the production of the disposables.

The real, long range solution to our water problems of course, lie ahead.

Meanwhile, although we can't make it if rain, we can and do make disposables a source of water because they don't use it.