



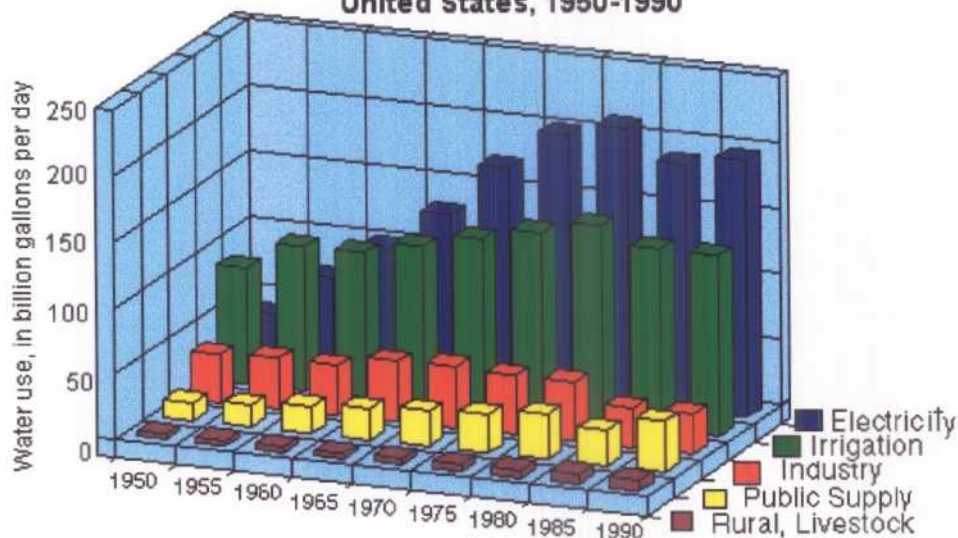
Water Science for Schools

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Trends in water use

How has America's water use changed over the last 40 years? Are we using more or less water, and are there trends for different kinds of water use? There is a lot of information in this bar graph. It shows the amount of water used for five categories of water use from 1950-1990.

Trends in water use by category in the United States, 1950-1990



The bars that stand out most are the blue ones -- water for electricity production. Electricity water use increased almost 500 percent from 1950 to 1990. Irrigation water use increases by about 50 percent -- it takes more water to grow food for our increasing population. Notice how after 1980 water use started to decline a bit. Maybe after 1980 we started using more water-conservation measures. What do you think? The yellow public-supply boxes are important. Notice how they continue on an uptrend. Public-supply water (water withdrawn by the local county and city water departments and delivered to homes and businesses) goes to serve our normal water uses, such as supplying industries, restaurants, and homes with water. Our ever-increasing population demands ever-increasing supplies of water.



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