OYSTER FILTER POWER:

Calculate average daily water usage.

DIVE DEEPER:

1. Federal regulations set in 1994 mandated that shower head flow must be restricted to 2.5 gallons per minute (GPM). Prior to that regulation, shower head GPM was closer to 5.5. Low-flow shower heads must run at less than 2 GPM.

❑ GOT IT!

2. Older, conventional toilets can use up to 5 gallons per flush (GPF). New low-flow models have been found to use as little as 1.6 GPF or less. We chose to average this number at 3 GPF.

❑ GOT IT!

3. The maximum flow rate for a bathroom faucet is 2.2 GPM, but it can be as low as 0.8 GPM. With the recommended cleaning time of 2 minutes, we figured you would spend around 4 gallons of water if the faucet were left on while you brushed your teeth.

❑ GOT IT!

4. The CDC suggests that you wash your hands for 20 seconds. If an average-flow faucet was left running during that time, you would spend 2/3 of a gallon of water. Thankfully, even the CDC asks that you shut off the tap while scrubbing your hands.

❑ GOT IT!

5. Take into account this number does not reflect all of your water consumption throughout the day (consider: dishes, laundry, car and pet washing, gardening/ landscaping, etc.)

❑ GOT IT!

1. Ask each member of your family how long they spend in the shower on average. Total these numbers to determine how many minutes your family spends in the shower.

_____ x 2.5 gallons = _____

Family Total Shower Minutes — TOTAL GALLONS

2. Ask each family member how many times they flush the toilet each day on average.

_____ x 3 gallons = _____

Family Total Number of Flushes — TOTAL GALLONS

3. Determine the number of family members that (accidentally) leave the faucet on while brushing their teeth.

_____ x 4 gallons = _____

Number of Family Members — TOTAL GALLONS

4. Determine the number of family members that leave the faucet on while washing their hands.

_____ x 0.67 gallons = _____

Number of Family Members — TOTAL GALLONS

5. FINALLY, total the answers from questions 1-4. This will give you an idea of your family's total water consumption per day.

Family's Total Daily Water Consumption = _____

TOTAL GALLONS

Assume that one adult oyster can filter 50 gallons of water per day. How many adult oysters would your family need to filter the amount of water totaled above?

What water saving techniques can help you lower your daily water consumption?

CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

Saving a National Treasure

INVESTIGATION