

Experts call for end of flushing toilets on World Toilet Day

By Ian RakowskiNEWS.com.auNovember 19, 2008 12:01am

- Experts call for "dry" toilets
- Could spell end of flushing dunny
- In pictures: Weird toilet designs

AS the world celebrates World Toilet Day today, sanitation experts have called for the end of the flushing dunny to save water and provide fertilizer for crops.

Leading health advocates have called for the use of "dry" toilets which separate urine from faeces and remove the need to flush.

Speaking at the recent World Toilet Summit in Macau, World Toilet Organisation founder Jack Sims said the concept of the flushing toilet was unsustainable.

Mr Sims said a culture where people flushed their loos but disregarded the thousands of litres of wasted drinking water each year was one of sanitation's greatest challenges.

"This 'flush and forget' attitude creates a new problem which we have to revisit," he said.

New toilet tax proposed

There have already been calls by Australian experts to reduce the amount of water wasted through toilet flushing with a proposed new toilet tax.

Adelaide University's Water Management Professor Mike Young said the tax would encourage people to take shorter showers, recycle washing machine water or connect rainwater tanks to internal plumbing.

"Some people may go as far as not flushing their toilet as often, as the less sewage you produce the less the rate you pay," Professor Young said.

Top of the range

If you aren't flushed with enthusiasm by a third-world toilet, Time magazine recently revealed the world's most expensive toilet.



Best toilet ever ... no need to pause anymore / AP

The sophisticated lavatory from Japanese manufacturer Toto features a self-raising or closing toilet lid, a seat-warmer and ambient music to make relieving yourself as pleasant as possible.

Several of these features are already the mainstay of upper-class Japanese restaurants, while some of the top range models can even check blood pressure, urine protein, weight and body fat.

Now if only people could figure out how to use it:



Toilet facts:

- The average person spends three years of their life on the “john”.
- The average person flushes a toilet about 2500 times a year, while using about eight sheets of toilet paper per day.
- An estimated 2.6 billion people worldwide do not have access to proper toilet facilities, particularly in rural areas of China and India.
- Lack of suitable toilets and sanitation kills approximately 1.8 million people a year, many of them children.
- According to Jack Sims, a further 500 million toilets are needed to bridge the gap in sanitation.
- The first flushing toilet was invented in 1596 by Sir John Harrington, a British noble and godson to Queen Elizabeth I. He only invented one, as he was ridiculed by his peers, but he still used it for himself.
- Most toilets flush in the key of E flat.
- On average, a person will use 22 litres of drinkable water every day flushing a toilet.