

Taco Bell Kitchens to Save 300 Million Gallons of Water Per Year

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New Grill-to-Order Cooking Technology Conserves Water, Energy

Conserving water has never been so easy - or delicious. Taco Bell is rolling out its new Grill-to-Order cooking method by installing water and energy saving electric grills that will conserve 300 million gallons of water per year, the equivalent of filling enough 8oz. cups to stretch across the United States 80 times.

Already operating in more than 3,000 restaurants-or about half of all Taco Bell(R) locations-the company plans to have all its 5,600 restaurants using the Grill-to-Order cooking method by 2010. With Grill-to-Order, customers will enjoy the same great Mexican-style inspired tastes, along with a temperature improvement of products containing grilled tortillas and flatbread. While Taco Bell is taking responsible action in improving its food preparation practices, customers have the added benefit of conserving our most precious natural resources with every order.

Grill-to-Order goes beyond conserving water as roughly 200 million kWh of electricity will also be saved per year - enough electricity to power the nation's tallest building, the Sears Tower in Chicago, for roughly 18 months. Additionally, the new equipment will save more than 1.2 million therms of gas each year by not heating water. Grill-to-Order demonstrates Taco Bell's ongoing work and long term commitment to sustainability and corporate responsibility.

'We hope to show our customers that even small, every day changes can lead to conservation and sustainability,' said Warren Widicus, Chief Officer of Growth, Taco Bell Corp. 'Whether you take shorter showers, turn off the water while brushing your teeth or purchase a Grill-to-Order menu item at one of our Taco Bell locations, you can save water and impact the environment in a positive way without even thinking about it.'

Taco Bell partnered with Southern California Edison (SCE) and their Foodservice Technology Center to validate energy savings of the Grill-to-Order dry line. SCE recently lauded the cooking method, calling it an energy management success story.

Water - Use it Wisely, a national campaign aimed at educating individuals on the importance of water conservation, has endorsed Taco Bell as a pioneer that other quick service restaurants should follow.

'Companies like Taco Bell have taken a proactive step in cutting back water use and thinking of alternative ways to offer a product that is not only good for their customer but good for the environment, too,' said Park Howell, Founder, Water - Use it Wisely. 'Every ounce of water saved by using the Grill-to-Order cooking method will benefit the communities Taco Bell serves.'

The 'green' inspired cooking method stands to impact Taco Bell's bottom line as well. 'Reducing waste, improving productivity, increasing efficiency-they're all ongoing efforts here at Taco Bell,' said Rick Winfree, Senior Director of Engineering. 'In the restaurants we've tested in, we're seeing savings of as much as \$5,900 a year in electricity cost per store. System wide, we'll save more than \$17 million a year for our company and franchise restaurants.'

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