



World Toilet Day 2020

November 19, 2020 | Bärbel Zierl

Topics: Wastewater | Water & Development | Society | Organisation & Staff

At Eawag, the aquatic research institute, numerous scientists are conducting research into toilets. In short videos, seven of them explain what fascinates them about the topic and what exactly their research is all about.

In Switzerland, going to the toilet is an everyday occurrence. Not so in other countries. Even today, over two billion people still have no access to sanitary facilities. There are many different reasons for this: lack of financial and human resources, poor planning, lack of water, or even socio-cultural norms. Eawag is therefore conducting research into new planning methods and concepts to solve this challenge in a sustainable and fair manner.

Modern toilets also open up new possibilities for recovering nutrients, water and energy from wastewater. Eawag is therefore developing systems and technologies for toilets to enable valuable resources to be recycled.

To mark World Toilet Day on 19 November, we asked Eawag researchers what interested them about toilets, their use and further development, and what they were currently researching.

Dr Linda Strande

Group Leader, MEWS: Management of Excreta, Wastewater, and Sludge

“The toilets of around one-third of the world’s population are not connected to a sewer. We are talking about toilets for 2.8 billion people!”

Further information on the research project

MEWS: Management of Excreta, Wastewater and Sludge

Nienke Andriessen

Project Manager, MEWS: Management of Excreta, Wastewater, and Sludge

“My ideal world of the future is one where toilets are clean, everyone has access to one, and the human waste is taken away in a hygienic and sustainable way.”

Further information on the research project

MEWS: Management of Excreta, Wastewater and Sludge

Abishek S Narayan

Doctoral Researcher on Citywide Inclusive Sanitation

“My research is on the paradigm shift that is Citywide Inclusive Sanitation.”

Further information on the research project

[Citywide Inclusive Sanitation](#)

George Wainaina

PhD student, Department of Environmental Social Sciences

“Implementing sanitation interventions in informal settlements is very difficult and complex. Therefore, I study this complex nature of introducing such projects.”

Further information on the research project

[Sanitation upgrading strategies for informal settlements \(SUSIS\)](#)

Prof. Kai M. Udert

Group Leader Source Separation and Decentralisation

“The separate treatment of urine, feces and flushing water provides good solutions.”

Further information on the research project

[Source Separation and Urine Treatment](#)

Carina Doll

Project Coordinator, Water Hub, NEST

“When we go to the toilet, we are often not aware that that our urine contains very valuable nutrients and that we are simply flushing them down the toilet.”

Further information on the research project

[Water Hub within NEST](#)

Nathalie Hubaux

Project Coordinator, resource-oriented sanitation technologies

“There are many resources in wastewater that are just waiting to be recovered, such as water, energy and nutrients.”

Further information on the research project
[Water Hub within NEST](#)

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Cover picture: Linda Strande

Related Links

World Toilet Day 2020 of the United Nations



[Das Toiletten-Tabu \(The toilet taboo\)](#)

Film by ARTE with contributions from Eawag (in German)

Contact



Nienke Andriessen

Project Officer

Tel. +41 58 765 5082

nienke.andriessen@eawag.ch



Abishek S Narayan

(Dr. Sc. ETH) Project Manager / Researcher

Tel. +41 58 765 6771

abishek.narayan@eawag.ch



Linda Strande

Tel. +41 58 765 5553

linda.strande@eawag.ch



Kai Udert

Tel. +41 58 765 5360

kai.udert@eawag.ch



George Wainaina

Scientific Knowledge Broker

Tel. +41 58 765 5331

george.wainaina@eawag.ch



Bärbel Zierl

Science editor

Tel. +41 58 765 6840

baerbel.zierl@eawag.ch

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