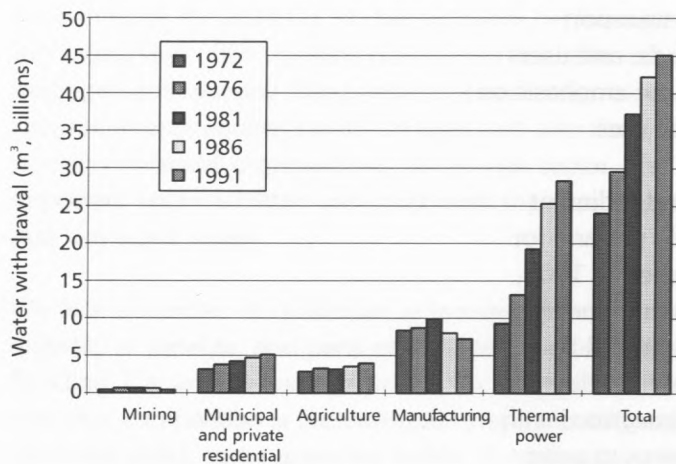


**Total Water Withdrawal in Canada, 1972–1991**

Note: For municipal and private residential uses, private residential uses are estimates only and water supplied to industries from municipal water supplies is excluded.

Source: Environment Canada.

The manufacturing sector is making steady progress toward more efficient use of water. In many industries, such as steel and pulp and paper manufacturing, technical advancements, recycling efforts, and the adoption of the principles of eco-efficiency have resulted in significant decreases in water use. For example, through water recirculation, a steel plant located on the St. Lawrence River in Quebec was able to realize a 36 percent reduction in the total volume of water used. An added benefit is the energy savings from pumping less water. Saving water and energy not only benefits the environment, but can also lower operating costs.

Freshwater resources play an important role in Canada's economy. Water is a critical input into many industrial processes, including manufacturing, mineral extraction, and thermal power generation. The cost to these sectors alone of acquiring and treating water was well over \$1 billion in 1991. In addition, providing municipal water and wastewater services has become an important economic sector, with annual revenues exceeding \$3 billion.

Canadian freshwater also sustains important commercial and recreational fisheries. The 1995 commercial freshwater fishery for species such as lake whitefish, yellow pickerel, and perch resulted in a harvest of 38 207 tonnes with a landed value of \$76.6 million. Inland aquaculture production of trout species complemented commercial fish-harvesting operations by adding an additional 4800 tonnes valued at approximately \$19 million.

### Lake Erie Commercial Fishery

Before 1980, Canada's Lake Erie commercial fishery was overfished. A system of management was developed to protect fish stocks, incomes, and investments. In 1984, fishers and the Government of Ontario agreed to implement a quota system. The control of harvests was more effective, and the industry stabilized. This management effort, along with significant cleanup efforts, has made Lake Erie one of Canada's major inland commercial fisheries, contributing \$34.1 million to the economy annually.