

Elementary science project saving Reno Aces money and water

By Lenita Powers, Reno Gazette-Journal

The science project of a 9-year-old Reno student has helped the Reno Aces ballpark save tens of thousands of gallons of water and could help homeowners cut their water bills as well.

Mason Perez's discovery of a simple way to conserve water began with a messy hot dog.

Mason was only 7 when he was at an Aces game with his mother, Stacy, in 2009.

After eating a hot dog, his hands and face were covered with ketchup and relish, so they went to one of the bathrooms to wash up.

"The water was coming out of the faucet so hard that I pulled my hands away," said Mason, a student at High Desert Montessori School. "I said, 'Mom, ouch, that's too hard.' So she leaned over and turned the valve down."

It was Mason's version of Sir Isaac Newton's observation of the falling apple. But instead of resulting in the theory of gravity, Mason theorized that reducing water pressure by turning the water supply valves to bathroom and kitchen sinks only halfway on could conserve water.

Mason's mother said construction workers leave those valves fully open to allow air and sediment to drain out, but businesses and homeowners don't think about partially closing them to save water.

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