



HOW TO DETERMINE IF YOU HAVE A WATER LEAK

The best method for determining whether or not a leak exists is to take an actual meter reading from the meter inside your house. Please see “How to Read Your Water Meter” for further direction on reading your meter.

1. Write down all the numbers on the face of the register. This should be done when there will not be any water used for several hours (either before bed or right before leaving the house for sometime).
2. Upon waking or returning to your house, take another reading from the meter for comparison. In theory, the two readings should be the same. If they are not, and you cannot account for the use by a humidifier, ice maker or water softener, then you have a leak and further investigation is recommended.

From our experience, 90% of the leaks in residential plumbing systems are found at the toilet tank. *We encourage you to look for a leak.* A leak does not necessarily mean that there will be water on the floor. Water leaks are costly - a “typical” toilet leak at today’s rates can add hundreds of dollars to a single water bill. Abnormally high bills can also be caused by water softeners, humidifiers, or an unattended outdoor hose. These are the most common causes, but there are others.

There are many ways for your toilet to be leaking.

1. The **flapper** is located at the bottom of your tank and is designed to hold the water in the tank. The flapper can deteriorate or warp, causing water to leave the tank without making any noise at all. A good test to determine if your flapper needs to be replaced is to use a **Leak Detection tablet** (available **free** from the **City’s Finance Dept.**) or food coloring. Gently drop one Leak Detection tablet or a few drops of food coloring into the water in the tank. Wait 20 – 30 minutes, then check to see that the blue colored water has not come down into the bowl. If the colored water is in the bowl, your flapper is leaking and needs to be replaced.
2. The **water level** for your toilet may be too high. In this case, the water may be running into the overflow tube. Check to make sure that the level is at least 1” below the top of the overflow tube. If it is not, adjust the float to this level.
3. The **flushing arm and lift chain** may not be working properly. This is usually the problem if you have to jiggle the handle to get the toilet to stop running. In this case, and if the problem remains, it is just like an open faucet running at nearly full force.
4. The **float rod, ballcock, and/or float ball** could be corroded. Replacement parts are fairly inexpensive and easy to install. These parts are available at hardware and home improvement stores. If you are not sure you can handle the job, call a plumber. **It’s important that you stop the leak.**

