

HOW TO SAVE WATER AND MONEY BY FINDING AND FIXING LEAKS



Finding and Fixing Household Leaks is Easy and Inexpensive

Dripping faucets and running toilets are more than a nuisance. They waste water and cost you money. Other water leaks are less noticeable. If your water bill skyrockets for no apparent reason, chances are that there's a leak somewhere.

Water lost from a continuous leak for one year

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Diameter	Leak Size	Gallons Lost
1/4"	●	4,725,996
3/16"	●	2,664,000
1/8"	●	1,184,004
1/16"	●	296,004
1/32"	●	74,004

HERE'S HOW TO PROCEED:

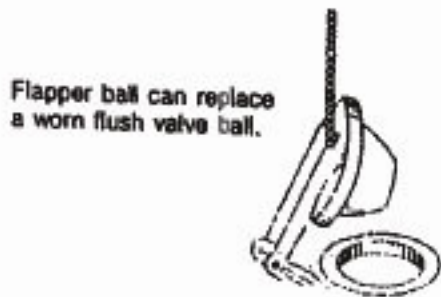
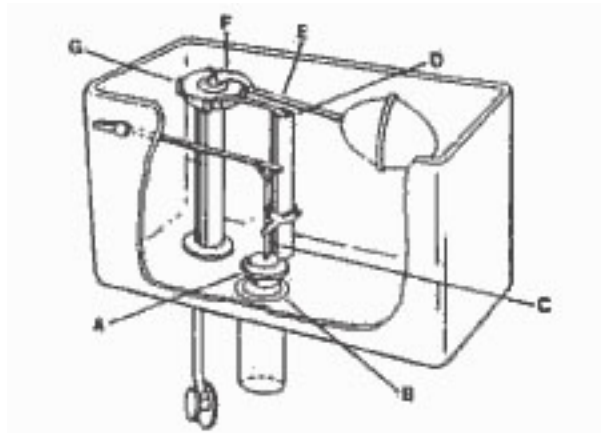
Check for Leaks

A simple procedure detects leaks that may exist anywhere in your home.

1. Locate your water meter.
2. Turn off all water – inside and outside.
3. Read your meter and jot down the figures.
4. Wait 15 to 20 minutes and read it again.
5. If the figures have changed, there's a leak somewhere. Your next step is to find the source.

PINPOINT THE LEAKS

Start with the toilet

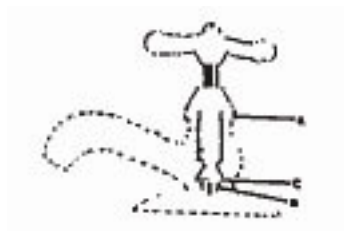


Toilets are the most common sources of leaks. Here's how to find them.

1. Put a dye tablet or several drops of food coloring in the toilet tank. Wait 15 minutes without flushing the toilet. If colored water appears in the bowl, you have a leak. The flush valve ball (A) probably needs to be replaced.

2. If the flush valve ball isn't worn, check to see whether it fits into the flush valve (B) snugly. If this valve is corroded, clean it. Then, if the ball still won't seat properly, straighten the guidewire (C) and make sure it's not catching on anything. (Newer toilets have a chain and a "flapper ball" instead of the guidewire and flush valve ball.)
3. Sprinkle a small amount of talcum powder on top of water in tank. If this powder moves toward the overflow tube (D), you probably have an overflow leak. Gently bend float arm (E) down to shut off valve before water spills into the tube. Or, replace the float valve (F).
4. If your toilet whistles, whines or won't shut off after adjusting the float ball, you may need a new ballcock assembly (G). Hardware and plumbing stores sell complete kits with instructions.

You don't need to be a detective to find leaky faucets. And it's not necessary to be a magician to fix them. The most common cause of leaks is a worn washer.



Here's how to fix a washer on simple faucets:

1. Shut off the water at the nearest shutoff valve – or at the main shutoff valve.
2. Loosen the cap nut (A) by turning counter clockwise. Turn the faucet handle in the direction of opening until it comes off.
3. Lift out the faucet assembly.
4. Unscrew the brass setscrew (B) which holds the washer (C) in place.
5. Remove the old washer. Flush or wipe the cup clean.
6. Select the proper size replacement washer and insert it. Then replace the setscrew.
7. Replace the assembly. Turn faucet handle as far as possible to close it. Then loosen handle slightly.
8. Replace cap nut. Close the faucet. Turn on the water.

If your faucet has a more elaborate design, consult a "how-to" book on plumbing.

When to call an expert

If your meter indicates a leak and you can't find it, or if you're reluctant to tackle these tasks, call a plumber.