

## Tips to Locate and Correct Water Waste in Your Home

The **Cost of Wasted Water** can make a big impact on your bimonthly Water Bill. Even a small leak 1/32" leak can result in loss of 0.03 cubic meters per hour – or 270 cubic meters per year. That can lead to an increase in your Water Bill of \$902.61 per year!

Small leaks can significantly affect your Water Bill but catching them early protects your home and helps conserve our community's water supply.

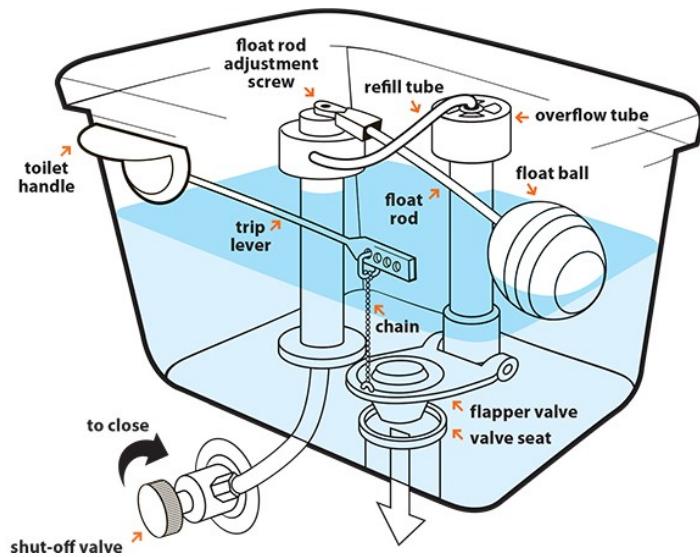
*The following information are suggestions only. If you need repairs or are unsure what to do, please contact a licensed plumber or other qualified professional. Property owners are responsible for plumbing repairs and maintenance on internal and private service lines. The City is not responsible for internal plumbing leaks or their assessment.*

**Toilets** are a common source of hidden water leaks and can easily waste more than 1 cubic meter a day: that's 1000 litres or an additional \$200 on your water bill! A toilet can leak at the float rod, overflow tube or the flapper. Simple tests you can do to check for a silent leaking toilet only take 20 minutes and can save you hundreds on your water bill.

Important: Before performing any DIY repairs make sure the main shut-off valve and the shut-off below the toilet are in working condition.

### The Dye Test

Remove the toilet tank lid and make sure the water level is about 1.5 cm (1/2 inch) below the overflow tube. Adjust the float to fill the tank to make the water level correct (if necessary). Put a few drops of food colouring into the toilet tank. Do not flush. Wait 15-20 minutes. If you see the colour of the dye in the toilet bowl – you have a silent leak! The leak can be fixed by cleaning, realigning or replacing the flapper. If you're handy, you can repair the leak with parts from your local hardware store, or you can call a licensed plumber to help.



Other common toilet problems include:

- Incorrect float arm and fill level.
- A leak in the overflow tube.
- Chain length is too short or long.
- A Loose Handle.

Older toilets use more water to flush than newer toilets which can affect your bill. It can mean a difference of up to 30 litres (0.03 cubic meters) per flush compared to 6 litres (0.006 cubic meters) per flush with a newer toilet.

**Leaky Faucets** can waste a lot of water – even a slow drip adds up! Just two drops per minute can waste over 3,000 litres (3.0 cubic meters) of water in two months. Leaks often happen because of worn washers, loose fittings or O-rings, which are small replaceable parts available for purchase at your local hardware store. This can include areas such as sinks, tubs and showers.

Outside Taps (Hoses) should always be shut off at the tap not just the hose nozzle. In the winter, the shut off valve for each hose line should be in the off position and the line drained to prevent freezing and bursting pipes.

**Water Meters** can help residents monitor usage and detect if there is a hidden leak at a property. Each Neptune Water Meter has a black cap that can be flipped open. Under the cap you will see the meter reading and a ProCoder dial. One full turn of the red ProCoder sweeping hand is equal to 1 litre of water (or 0.001 cubic meters).

#### **The ProCoder Test:**

You can perform this test to isolate specific fixtures or to review overall usage in the property.

If you see the red needle moving clockwise – water is being used in the property. If the red needle does not move – no water is being used in the property.

When performing this test, if you are confident water is not intentionally being used in the property, but the red needle is moving there could be a leak somewhere after the meter.

Water Meters normally record up to 3% below the true usage. That means the account holder is regularly billed less for the water used at the property. If you think your water meter is not recording **accurate consumption** you can ask the City to test the meter by submitting a written request and paying a deposit. Residents should be aware that if the meter reads in favour of the resident the testing cost will be the responsibility of the resident. If the meter reads too high (over 3% in the City's favour), the testing and replacement cost of the meter is free.

Our staff are ready and available to assist you in reviewing your water usage trends if you suspect a leak, or believe your usage is too high. The first review of the calendar year is at no charge. Additional requests for usage reviews incur a Water Meter Data Fee of \$30.00 that will be added to your next water bill. For more information on this service please contact our department.

