

How to Detect a Leak

Leak Detection:

- To use your water meter to detect leaks, turn off all water fixtures and appliances and make sure that no one is using water. Record the meter reading. Check your water meter after a two-hour period when no water is being used. If the meter does not read exactly the same, you probably have a leak.
- A silent toilet leak can waste 30 – 500 gallons per day. To check for a leak in the toilet, put several drops of food coloring in the toilet tank. If the color shows up in the bowl within 10 minutes without flushing, you have a leak. Make sure to flush immediately after this experiment to avoid staining the tank.

Typical Water Use at Home

(<https://water.usgs.gov/edu/qa-home-percapita.html>)

Bath = 36 gallons.

Shower = up to 5 gallons of water per minute.

Teeth brushing = <1 gallon.

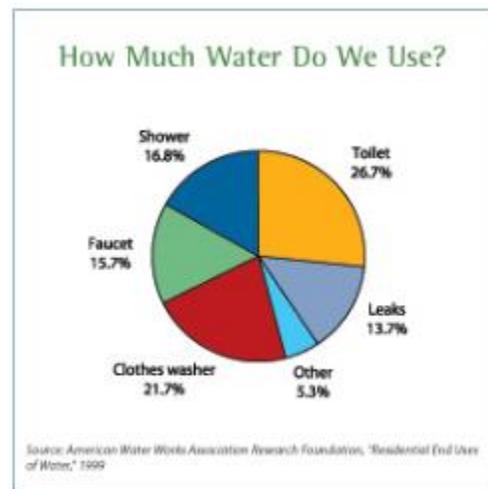
Dishwasher = 6-16 gallons.

Dish washing by hand = 8-27 gallons.

Clothes washer = 25 – 40 gallons/load.

Toilet flush = 3 gallons.

Outdoor watering = 2 gallons per minute.



Simple Steps to Save Water

(<http://www.epa.gov/WaterSense/pubs/fixleak.html>)

- Check for toilet leaks by adding food coloring to the tank. If the toilet is leaking, color will appear in the bowl within 15 minutes. (Make sure to flush as soon as the test is done, since food coloring can stain the tank.)
- Repair dripping faucets and showerheads. A drip rate of one drip per second can waste more than 3,000 gallons per year.
- A full bathtub can require up to 70 gallons of water, while taking a 5-minute shower uses only 10 to 25 gallons.
- Turning off the tap while you brush your teeth can save 8 gallons per day.
- Wash only full loads of dishes and clothes or lower the water settings for smaller loads.
- Water your lawn or garden during the cool morning hours, as opposed to midday, to reduce evaporation.
- Look for sprinklers that produce droplets, not mist, or use soaker hoses or trickle irrigation for trees and shrubs.
- Set sprinklers to water lawns and gardens only. Check that you're not watering the street or sidewalk.
- Try not to overwater your landscaping. Learn plants' water needs and water different types appropriately.
- Don't overfertilize. You will increase the lawn's need for water.
- Raise your lawn mower blade to at least 3 inches. Taller grass promotes deeper roots, shades the root system, and holds soil moisture better than a closely cropped lawn.
- Plant climate-appropriate species. Try plants that are native to where you live, which don't require as much water, and group plants together by water requirements.
- Use mulch around trees and plants to help reduce evaporation and control water-stealing weeds.