

# *Do You Have a Leak?*

*Do you have a leaky pipe? Is it in your home or outside? Is it your leak to repair, or is your local water system responsible for it? For consumers, these questions can be answered by taking a few easy steps to detect the leak.*

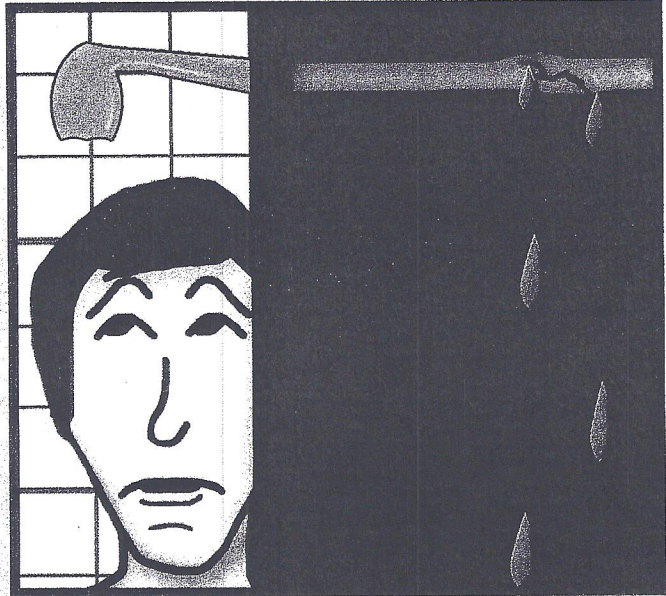
1. Turn off all appliances that use water, such as refrigerators, washing machines, sinks, showers, toilets and outside sprinkler systems. Make sure no water is running or is being used inside or outside the home.

2. Check the meter on your meter box outside. Most meters have a leak indicator in the form of a rotating black-and-silver disk, a red triangle or a single red or black dial that moves when water is being used in the home. If this is moving with all water use stopped at the home, then there is a leak. If there is no indicator, then check the dials or numbers on the meter. Check again after 15 or 30 minutes. If they have moved, there is a leak.

3. Shut off the water at the main outside valve. This usually is located next to the water meter. Check the water inside the home by turning on the faucet. If water still flows after several seconds, the shut-off valve may not be working properly. Contact your water system. If the water stops, return to the meter.

4. Check the meter again. If the leak indicator or dials are still moving, then there is a leak between the shut-off valve and the meter. Contact the water system. If the meter is no longer running, chances are the leak is inside or just outside the home and is up to the homeowner to repair. Check appliances, sinks and toilets for possible leaks.

5. To check a toilet for a leak, turn the main water valve back on as well as the toilet. Flush the toilet, and as the back tank is filling, add two or three drops of food coloring. Wait 15-30 minutes. If the water in the bowl changes color, the flapper valve on the toilet is leaking and needs to be replaced. Flapper valves for most toilets can be found at standard hardware and home-improvement stores and are fairly easy to replace, or you can consult a plumber about repairs. Also, be sure the water line is not set too high. Otherwise, it could continually run down the overflow pipe. The water level can be adjusted by repositioning the float (often shaped like a round bulb or a canister).





## HOW TO SAVE WATER

We are indebted to the South Tahoe Public Utility District of California for the valuable information below on how to conserve water. This information was sent to their customers a few years ago in anticipation of a severe drought situation. Although most of us are not faced with this kind of problem, the chart does point out how wasteful some water use practices can be. Even without the dire necessity of saving water, all of us can watch how we use it for such simple things as shaving, brushing our teeth, and in various water consuming appliances.

Normal Use		Conservation Use
Shower	Water running - 25 gallons	Wet down, soap up, rinse off - 4 gallons
Brushing Teeth	Tap running - 10 gallons	Wet brush, rinse briefly - 1/2 gallon
Tub Bath	Full - 36 gallons	Minimal water level - 10 to 12 gallons
Shaving	Tap running - 20 gallons	Fill basin - 1 gallon
Dishwashing	Tap running - 30 gallons	Wash and rinse in dishpans or sink - 5 gallons
Automatic Dishwasher	Full cycle - 16 gallons	Short cycle - 7 gallon
Washing hands	Tap running - 2 gallons	Fill basin - 1 gallon
Toilet Flushing	Depending on tank size - 5 to 7 gallons	Using tank displacement bottom - 4 to 6 gallons
Washing Machine	Full cycle, top water level - 60 gallons	Short cycle - minimal water level - 27 gallons
Outdoor Watering	Average hose - 10 gallons per minute	Lowest priority - Eliminate

### Other Methods of Saving Water are:

1. Installing orifice devices in faucets, especially in shower heads where the flow could be cut from 5-15 gpm to 3 gpm.
2. Placing a brick or plastic bottle in the water closet of toilet.
3. Installing pressure-reducing valves at homes which have excessive pressure.
4. Installing devices which give instant tempered water instead of letting the water run for the hot water to begin.

## DON'T LET YOUR TOILET WASTE WATER

1. A SILENT LEAK IN YOUR TOILET CAN WASTE SEVERAL THOUSAND GALLONS OF HIGH QUALITY WATER EACH YEAR AND PLACE UNNECESSARY DEMANDS ON YOUR SEWER SYSTEM OR SEPTIC TANK.

USUALLY YOU CAN NOT HEAR THE LEAK BECAUSE IT RUNS SLOWLY OUT OF THE TANK.

A LEAKING TOILET IS A SAD TOILET!

2. HOW CAN YOU DISCOVER IF YOUR TOILET LEAKS?

SIMPLE. FOLLOW THESE EASY STEPS AND YOU'LL KNOW.

- (A) LIFT OFF THE LID FROM YOUR TOILET TANK.
- (B) PLACE THREE OR FOUR DROPS OF ORDINARY FOOD COLORING INTO THE TOILET TANK (NOTE--DO NOT USE DYE--IT COULD STAIN).
- (C) DO NOT FLUSH OR OTHERWISE DISTURB THE TOILET FOR ONE OR TWO HOURS OR LONGER.
- (D) AT THE END OF THE WAITING PERIOD, OBSERVE THE TOILET BOWL. IF THE COLOR YOU PLACED INTO THE TANK SHOWS UP IN THE BOWL, YOU HAVE A LEAK.

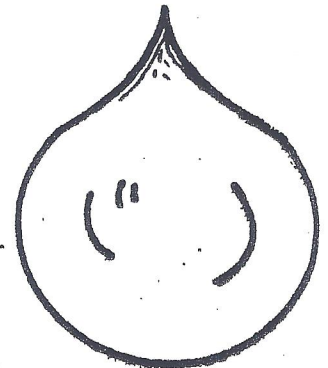
3. HOW DO YOU FIX A LEAKING TOILET?

MOST FREQUENTLY, LEAKS IN TOILETS ARE CAUSED BY A DEFECTIVE FLUSH VALVE. A FLUSH VALVE IS A FLAP OR BALL PLUNGER DEVICE THAT IS SUPPOSED TO ACT AS A STOPPER IN THE BOTTOM OF YOUR TOILET TANK. AFTER SEVERAL YEARS AND MANY FLUSHINGS, THE STOPPER CAN BE KNOCKED OUT OF SHAPE OR SIMPLY WORN OUT.

TO MAKE YOUR TOILET HAPPY AND TO SAVE WATER, SEE YOUR HARDWARE DEALER OR PLUMBER AND OBTAIN AN INEXPENSIVE AND EASY TO INSTALL REPLACEMENT VALVE OR COMPLETE REPLACEMENT KIT.

Provided by the Illinois Interagency Water Management/Conservation Committee with funding from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency.

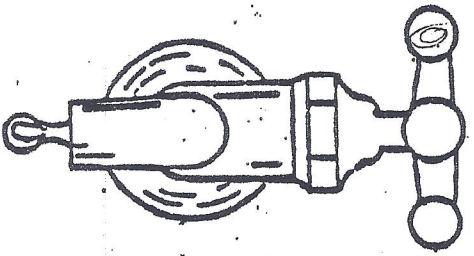
USE WATER WISELY!



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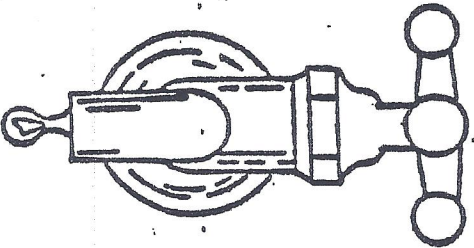


# AVERAGE LOSS OF WATER LEAKING FAUCETS OVER A PERIOD OF ONE MONTH



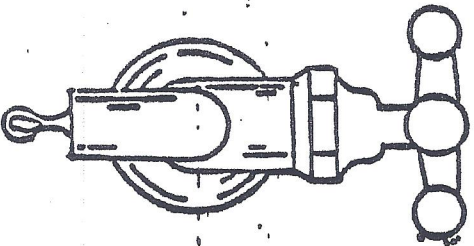
30  
DROPS  
PER  
MINUTE

54  
GALLONS  
PER  
MONTH



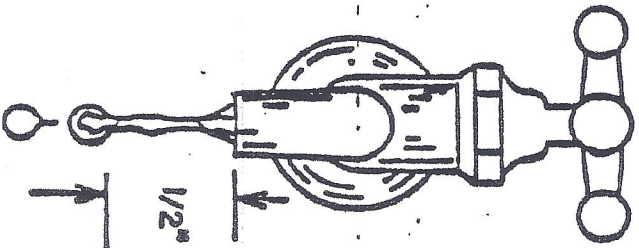
60  
DROPS  
PER  
MINUTE

113  
GALLONS  
PER  
MONTH

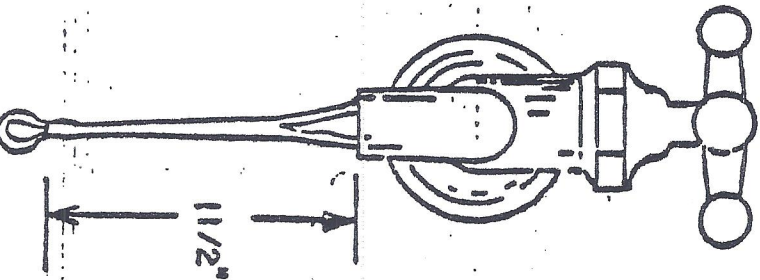


120  
DROPS  
PER  
MINUTE

237  
GALLONS  
PER  
MONTH



1014  
GALLONS  
PER  
MONTH



2202  
GALS.  
PER  
MONTH

SMALL, CONTINUOUS LEAKS WILL WASTE LARGE AMOUNTS OF WATER. IN ADDITION, LEAKS IN HOT-WATER LINES WILL WASTE HEAT. KEEP ALL VALVES AND FAUCETS TIGHT. WHEN A LEAK DEVELOPS, REPLACE FAUCET WASHERS. IF VALVES OR FAUCETS ARE DAMAGED, REPLACE FAUCET OR VALVE ASSEMBLY.