

High Water Consumption

An unusual increase in your water bill may be an indication of higher water consumption due to a leak in your service line or internal plumbing, such as a leaky toilet valve or plumbing fixture. To determine a leak, there are a few simple checks you can perform before calling a plumber or the City's Utility Department.

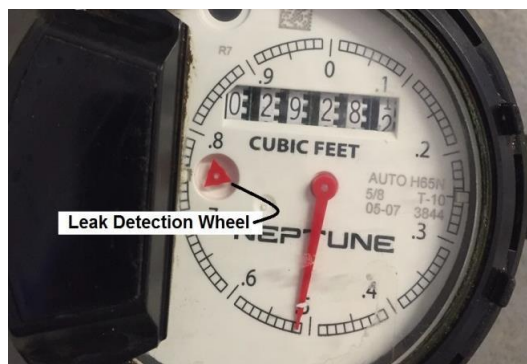
Step 1— Is it a leak?

Higher consumption during Spring and Summer months are often attributed to lawn & garden watering as well as washing vehicles.

Step 2— Checking for leaks

- a. Locate your water meter: The water meter is usually located near the property line, typically in a covered box in the ground near the street or sidewalk.
- b. Turn off all water sources. Make sure that no faucets, showers, toilets, or appliances that use water are running. Check indoor and outdoor taps, toilets, showers, and any other potential water sources.
- c. Take a close look at the leak detection wheel on the water meter (see picture). If there are no leaks, the wheel should remain stationary or rotate very slowly, indicating minimal water usage. **If the wheel is moving continuously or at a faster pace, it indicates a potential leak in the plumbing system.**

Please Note: Not all meters have a leak detection wheel, contact the City if this is the case.



Step 3—Locating a leak

To determine the location of a water leak, locate main shut-off valve inside house and turn off. If this causes the leak detection wheel to stop turning, then the leak is an internal plumbing issue, and you can advance to Step 4.

If the detection wheel continues turning, then the leak is in the service line between the water meter and the main shut-off valve. These leaks can be very hard to identify and could be related to an irrigation system if you have one. Check for unusually wet or damp areas in the yard. The City may be able to assist in locating this type of leak if it is not obvious.

Step 4—Check for Internal Leaks

Check for obvious leaks: While monitoring the meter, visually inspect your property for any signs of water leakage. Look for wet spots, dripping faucets, running toilets, or any visible water damage in walls, ceilings, or floors.

Use food coloring for toilet leak detection: To detect a hidden toilet leak, you can add a few drops of food coloring into the toilet tank. Wait for about 15 minutes without flushing. If the color appears in the toilet bowl, it indicates a leak in your toilet.

It is worth noting that a leaking toilet may also be caused by water going down the overflow pipe in the tank, this would be slow and silent and would not be caught by a dye test.

Another test is to make sure that no water is being used and check to see if the leak detection wheel on your water meter is turning. If it is, start by turning off the water supply line to each toilet and checking the leak detection wheel on the meter. If it has stopped turning then you have located the leak—time to repair or call the plumber.

Leak Size	Gallons Lost in 24 Hrs @ 40 PSI
1/32" •	160
1/16" •	650
1/8" •	2,550
1/4" •	10,200
3/8" •	19,440

Check all plumbing fixtures for possible drips or small leaks. These types of leaks may appear insignificant but can add up over a billing period.

Have an irrigation system?

It is suggested that you run a consumption check on your irrigation system, should you have one. You can do this by running a full irrigation cycle and obtaining a reading both before and after the cycle. This way you will know how much water you are consuming when running your system.

If you have not found a leak:

It is important to understand that water meters only record the water that has flowed through the meter. If a water meter has a malfunction, it is more likely to under-register the actual water usage.

Identifying a leak can often be challenging, and not all leaks described in this guide can be easily found. If you're unfamiliar with plumbing, you might overlook certain signs. However, by following these steps, you can generally determine an approximate location, which is a valuable exercise. This will ultimately save time for the plumber and, in turn, save you money.

Did you know that one hour of lawn sprinkling uses as much water as 25 toilet flushes, 5 loads of laundry and 5 dishwasher loads combined? Please keep in mind, your lawn only needs approximately one inch of water (about one hour of sprinkling) per week to stay healthy.

For more information, please visit:

www.whiterockcity.ca/mywater

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