



Look for hidden leaks

If you don't find a toilet leak, look for other sources. A burst pipe like the one above may seem easy to detect, but it could also be a small pinhole leak, dripping into the space between your walls and causing water damage as well as high water bills.

Water costs money... don't waste it!

A leak can waste up to 5 gallons of water a minute. That equals 7,200 gallons of water a day!

Gallons of water wasted at 60 psi water pressure with a continuous leak in the size shown

Diameter of water stream	Gallons wasted per day	Gallons wasted per quarter
•	813	74,000
●	3,253	296,000
●●	7,319	666,000
●●●	12,984	1,181,500



Toilets are an integral part of our lives. We use them every day. And when they leak, they can waste hundreds, even thousands of gallons of water a day. It can be expensive, as silent toilet leaks—leaks that occur from the tank into

the bowl and then into the sewer—often go unnoticed until we read your meter. Your water and sewer bill could double or even triple in a quarterly billing cycle. While toilets are the most likely cause of leaks in the home, they are not the only culprit.

According to the EPA, 10 percent of all homes have leaks that waste 90 or more gallons of water a day.

If you have tested your toilet for leaks, try looking in these other areas:

- Faucets/shower heads
- Bath tubs/laundry room tubs
- Outdoor sprinkler systems
- Outdoor spigots—either dripping or pipe burst due to freeze/thaw
- Whole house humidifiers attached to the furnace
- Water softeners that regenerate constantly
- Hot water heaters

You may need to call a plumber to help you assess the source of your leak.

Are water leaks costing you money?



Finding and fixing leaks in your home

And identifying other causes of high water bills

For more information on finding and fixing leaks, please go to our website at www.stpaul.gov/water



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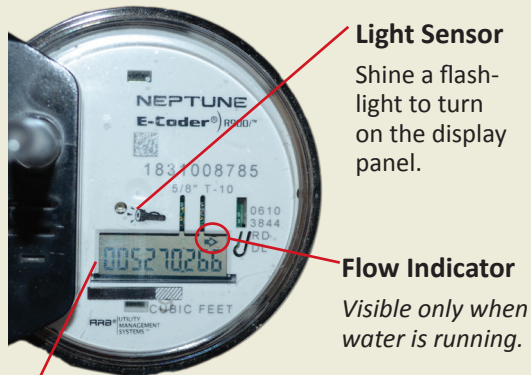
Locating and reading your water meter

Your meter is located inside your home, about one foot off of the floor in your basement. It could also be in a crawl space, pit in the floor, or utility room.

Reading Your Meter

You will need a **flashlight**.

Your display panel will alternate screens between total water use and rate of flow.



Light Sensor

Shine a flashlight to turn on the display panel.

Flow Indicator

Visible only when water is running.

Display Panel

Read all nine numbers from left to right to obtain a water meter reading.

Leak Indicator

This indicates a possible leak. It notes that water has been used throughout most of the day. If no leak is detected, the faucet image will not appear.



Rate Indicator

"RATE" means it is displaying the rate of water flowing through your water meter. The rate is measured in cubic feet per minute.



To use your water meter to detect toilet leaks, watch this video: tinyurl.com/waterMeterTest

Finding a toilet leak

1. Take the lid off of your toilet tank.
2. Put in a few drops of food coloring or a few dye tablets.
3. Stir the water in the tank with a long spoon or stick.
4. Wait 25 - 30 minutes.
5. Do not flush or use the toilet.
6. Look in the bowl. If the coloring has seeped from the tank into the bowl, you have a toilet leak.

A. If the float is not adjusted properly, water can continue to fill into the tank and drain down the overflow tube.

a. Pull up on the float.

b. If the water stops running, you might need to adjust the float.

B. The fill valve/ inlet valve is not set properly or has malfunctioned. This sometimes causes a hiss or a squeal when filling.

a. Try adjusting the fill valve.

b. You might need to replace it.

C. If a black residue rubs off when you touch the flapper, replace it.

Do you have to jiggle the handle to make the toilet stop running?

You might need to adjust the chain so that it allows the flapper to sit in the valve seat properly.

The advice listed here is general. SPRWS recommends contacting a licensed plumber for professional advice if you require additional assistance.

Other causes of higher water bills

There are other causes of high water bills. Changes in water use, rate increases, increased sewer charges, and line items on your bill can all make a difference.

Is it a seasonal increase? Summers are often marked by:

- Watering lawns and gardens, new sod and trees
- Washing cars
- Filling pools
- Using water-cooled air conditioning units
- Using pressure washers
- Housing returned college students
- Having more guests

Were there more people in the house during spring break or the holidays?

Was it the first water bill of the new year?

Water and sewer charges often increase annually. If you are using the same amount of water but paying more, was there a rate increase from one bill to the next?

Are you paying more for sewer charges?

For single and two-family homes, we set sewer use rates in the winter months when use is typically low. That rate is then capped for the rest of the year. You will not be charged for sewer use beyond your cap during that year.

However, if you had a leak during the sewer-setting winter months, your sewer setting rate will be higher than normal, capping your sewer rate at a higher level for the rest of the year.

Did you incur other charges? Late fees? Does this bill include a previous balance?