



Underground Leak Detection

- Look and feel for portions of your property that are always wet.
- View your driveway, curb or street for evidence of water flow. It may not be a steady stream of water; it may only be a puddle that never dries up, or a darker spot like when water is spilt on dry concrete.
- Look at your water meter and write down the meter reading. Do not run any water for a few hours and then go back to re-read your meter.
- If it shows use, and you have already fixed all other known leaks, then you may have an underground leak.

Checking for Leaks

Follow these steps to detect home leaks:

1. Locate your water meter.
2. Turn off all water both inside and out.
3. Read your meter and check to see if the leak indicator is moving. Depending on the brand of your meter, the leak indicator could be a small triangular shape dial or a small silver wheel that rotates when water is flowing through the meter. If the dial is moving, chances are you have a leak.
4. To find out how large the leak, write down the meter reading and wait 1 - 2 hours and take another meter reading, making sure no water is being used during this time. If the reading has changed, you have a leak.
5. To determine if the leak is inside or outside of your home, turn off the main shut off valve, typically in the basement or garage directly behind an outdoor faucet, or outside below an outdoor faucet. Repeat Steps 4 and 5.
6. If the leak indicator stops moving or there is no change in the meter reading, then you have a leak inside of the house.
7. If the leak indicator continues to move or there is a change to the meter reading, then the leak is outside between the meter and the house.
8. If you are unable to locate the leak, you may need to call a plumber.

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A Resident's Guide to Water Leak Detection

TOILET LEAKS

The most common place in finding a leak

One of the most common water wasters, yet less noticeable than a faucet leak is a leaking toilet. Toilet leaks are often caused by damaged or worn parts within the toilet flush tank. Here are a few simple tests that can show if you have a toilet leak:

Remove the tank lid from the toilet and check to see if the water level is roughly 1" below the overflow pipe. If the water is too high, water will continuously flow down the overflow tube. To check this, sprinkle some powder on the water surface in the tank. If the powder moves to go down the overflow tube, then the toilet is leaking.

The City of Fairborn Utility Division provides residents with Toilet Dye upon request to check for a leak. Take the lid off the toilet tank and place one of the toilet dye strips into the tank. Do not flush. Wait 20 minutes. If dye appears in the toilet bowl, your toilet is leaking. It is possible that the plunger ball or flapper either needs cleaned or replaced. There could also be a crack in the overflow tube. Water level in the toilet tank should be at least 1" below the overflow tube.

- A** Plunger Ball or Flapper
- B** Toilet Handle
- C** Overflow Tube
- D** Toilet Float



The flush handle should also be checked. Take the lid off the tank and flush the toilet. Make sure that the handle mechanisms operate smoothly and don't hang up or jam; the handle on the outside of the tank should come up on its own. Check the chain that goes from the handle to the flapper and make sure the chain does not get caught underneath. A sticking handle can keep the flapper or toilet float from completely closing off the bottom drain and can result in a larger than usual water bill.

Faucet Leaks

Most faucet leaks are due to worn washers, which are fairly inexpensive and can save from water being wasted. Even with a small leak, several gallons of water per day can add up on your water bill. Information on how to replace washers can be found at most local hardware stores. Short videos may also be found online.



Other Leaks

Other potential leaks may occur:

- Dishwashers and Clothes Washers - check for drips or stains underneath or behind these appliances.
- Water Heater Tank - check for water leaks on the floor or water dripping down the side of the tank.
- Water Softener - Make sure it regenerates properly. Review the discharge line for any flow; there should be no flow unless the softener is regenerating. If you suspect a leak, put the softener into bypass mode and call a water softener professional for possible repairs.