



How do I repair a leak?

While some leaks might be best repaired by a professional, many common leaks are easy to fix.

◆ **Toilets:** Some toilet leaks simply require a small adjustment to the float ball or float cup so that the water in the tank doesn't fill so high that it seeps into the overflow tube.

Other leaks can involve the replacement of tank components. Worn flappers are the most common cause of leaks and are easy to replace. Other replacement parts are also commonly available at hardware stores. Most are inexpensive and fairly easy to install.

◆ **Faucets:** Faucet leaks are usually caused by worn washers or "O" rings. Repairing this type of leak often involves little more than turning off the supply line to the faucet, replacing the washer, and turning the line on again.

The internet or a good household repair book can offer advice and give step-by-step instructions for such do-it-yourself tasks. They can also help you determine whether you can do the job yourself or if it is best left to an expert. Hardware stores can also provide helpful information, along with replacement parts.

Why repair my leaks?

It's often easy to delay maintenance tasks, but there are good reasons why leaks should be repaired promptly.

◆ **Reduced water bill.** Leaks waste surprising amounts of water, which can cost you month after month. If the leak involves hot water, you're also paying for the energy it takes to heat that water.



◆ At a minimum, leaks can be annoying. More importantly, **leaks can cause damage to your home or landscaping.**

◆ **Leaks not repaired tend to get worse over time,** increasing their potential to cause damage and water waste.

◆ If you repair a leak promptly and notify the Medford Water Commission, **you can receive a reduction on up to three monthly bills** to adjust for the leak.

◆ **Failure to repair leaks in a timely manner is a violation of Water Commission regulations.** It can result in additional water charges and even loss of service.

Unseen or unfixed, leaks can waste thousands of gallons of water each month.

Please help us by using this valuable resource wisely.



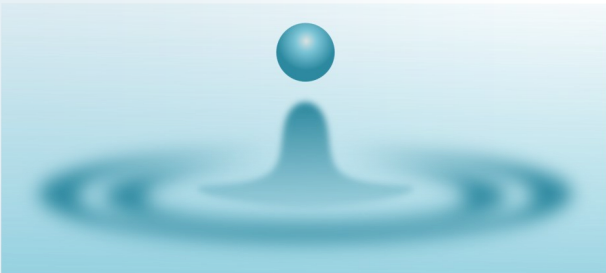
Water Leak Detection



Make every drop count!



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Do I have a leak?

Some leaks can be seen or heard. Others may be less noticeable. Having higher than normal water consumption is a good indicator that you may have leaks. Review your water bill, which shows how much water you used during the previous month as well as a graph comparing your water use to other months.

The size of your household and whether or not family members are home full time can result in somewhat higher or lower water use. Summer usage is most related to property size, with water use at larger properties logically being higher than at smaller lots.

Use the table below as a reference for comparison. For example, if your property is twice the size of a typical lot, your July usage might be about double the amount shown.

Typical Residential Usage (Per Month)

*Winter 5,000 gallons
Summer 25,000 gallons*

Your water meter can also be helpful in showing leaks. Check whether numbers in the register are moving when no water is being used. Some meters also have a leak indicator that turns when water is running.

There are various meter models in use, but most look similar to the one shown below. Open the lid to the meter box as well as the lid on the meter itself to view the register.

To confirm smaller leaks, turn all water off



**Example of a
leak indicator**

(including automatic ice makers) when you are leaving the house for an hour or two. Then write down the time and the numbers from the meter. Do the same as soon as you return. If the register has changed, you likely have a leak.

You can compute the size of the leak based on how much water went through the meter and how many minutes passed between meter readings. Keep in mind that seemingly insignificant leaks add up. For example, a 1/8 gallon per minute leak equals 66,000 gallons lost in a year.

If you have difficulty locating or reading your meter, give us a call for assistance.



How do I find a leak?

Some leaks can be difficult to locate. Following these steps can help.

- ◆ **Check all fixtures**, especially those you don't utilize often. They may be leaking or dripping without you realizing it.
- ◆ **Listen for leaks.** You may hear water running or dripping when no fixtures are operating, or you might hear a hissing sound. Try to follow the sound to its source.
- ◆ **Check your toilets.** They are common sources of hidden leaks. To test for a leak, put a noticeable amount of food dye into the toilet tank. Wait about 15 minutes. If the dye appears in the toilet bowl without flushing, there is a leak.
- ◆ **Look for water stains and wet spots.** This should include looking in obscure areas, such as under sinks or even under the house. Also, check outdoors in areas where pipes run. Sinkholes, wet spots or cracks in paving can be indicators of underground leaks.
- ◆ **Pool pipes can leak, too.** Pick a time when the pool won't be used and place a bucket of water on the pool steps filled to the exact same level as the pool water. Also shut off any auto-fill valves. If the pool water level is below the level in the bucket after 24 hours, the pool is losing more water than is evaporating, so a leak is likely. Do the same to check for pond leaks.
- ◆ If your leak is still a mystery, **hire a plumber** with leak detection devices.