

## Be a Leak Detector

A simple way to check whether you have leaks in your house is to read your water meter.

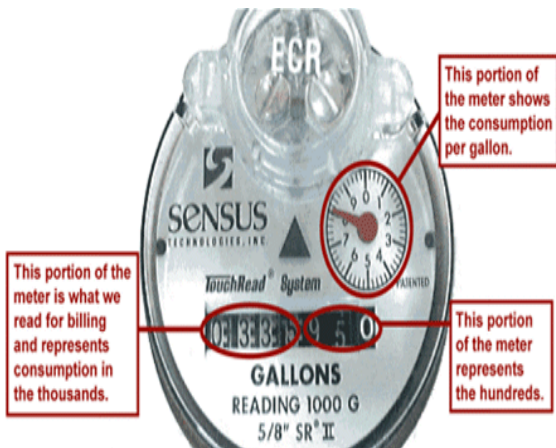
Turn off all the water in your house, remember to wait for the hot water heater, toilets, and ice-cube makers to refill, and for any regeneration of water softeners.

**Then** go to your meter and write down all the numbers you see. Look at the flow indicator gauge, **which is a small red dial**. If it is moving, then there is a leak inside the house.

To check for slow leaks, read your water meter before and after a period when no water is being used (**at least 1 hour**).


Common areas to check for leaks include toilets, faucets, water softeners, swimming pools, water heaters and faulty irrigation valves.

Check the pressure relief valve on your hot water heater. Often times, once the relief valve opens, it continues to leak until the valve is replaced. These valves can be dripping on the floor. If you find a leak, contact a plumber or someone well versed in this type of repair.



The Village of Poplar Grove well systems deliver approximately 60 PSI to your homes. Take a look at the chart below to see how fast water loss can add up.

SIZE OF LEAK		WASTE PER MONTH @ 60 psi
1/4 INCH	●	400,000 GALLONS
1/8 INCH	●	100,000 GALLONS
1/16 INCH	•	25,000 GALLONS
1/32 INCH	•	6,000 GALLONS

A dime has about 11/16 INCH diameter 

### REMEMBER

The Village of Poplar Grove currently has a bimonthly billing cycle. So make sure you multiply by two to show how much water you would use in a billing cycle.

For more information on how to conserve water visit the American Water Works Association website <http://www.awwa.org>

If we can be of any further service regarding leaks, or you would like a better understanding on how to calculate your water bill, **please contact us at: (815) 765-3201.**



## How Much Water Do You Use?



An average of **14% of residential** water is lost through leaking fixtures or pipes inside your home. So how can you reduce the amount of water you use? It's easy to check how much water is used and whether you have a leak in your home.

According to the EPA, the average US resident uses approximately **100 gallons** of water per day. That would be approximately **6,000 gallons** of water every **two** month billing cycle for each person in your house. Multiply that by a **family of 4** and water usage can easily reach **24,000 gallons** every two months.

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# EVERY DROP COUNTS

## TOILETS

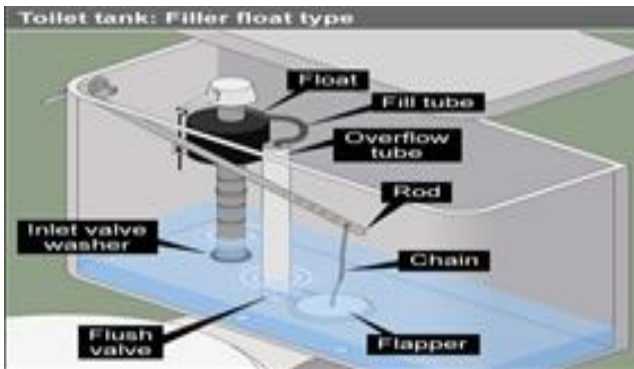
Toilets are often the **biggest** culprit of high water usage. They can continue flowing water because the flapper sticks, the chain is caught inside the tank, or parts are worn out inside the tank.

The average leaky toilet can waste about **200 gallons** of water per day. That's over **12,000 gallons** every **2** months for just **1** leaking toilet! Toilet leaks are often silent and can be intermittent, allowing loss of water to go undetected for long periods of time.

To detect silent leaks, remove the lid from the toilet tank, remove any colored or bleaching cleaning agents. Flush to clear the water in the bowl. Then add dye tablets (**available for free at Village Hall**), or few drops of food coloring. If there is a leak in the toilet, color will appear in the bowl within 20 minutes. Flush the remaining color from the tank as soon as the test is complete.

## SHOWERS AND BATHS

Check and replace leaky drain plugs in sinks, bathtubs, and your shower head. To save water, consider replacing your shower head with a low flow unit. The older the shower head, the more water it uses. Older fixtures can deliver as high as **8 gallons per minute**. Most new shower heads deliver less than **2.0 gallons per minute**. Some newer models deliver less than **2.0 gallons per minute**.



## LAUNDRY AND DISHWASHING

Clothes and dish washing machines have hoses and connections that can wear over time and begin leaking. Check the hoses often. If you are going on vacation, consider turning the water off to these units to avoid a major event if the hose breaks.

When you replace your clothes or dish washer, consider a water-efficient model that uses less water. Older and non-water efficient clothes washing machines can use as much as **40 gallons** of water per load. Newer, more efficient, models can use as little **15-20 gallons per load**. Older dishwashers use **10-12 gallons per load**. When purchasing a standard-size dishwasher, consider a model that uses **6.5 gallons** of water per cycle or less. Compact models should use **4.0 gallons** per cycle.

## WATER SOFTENERS

Water softeners can also be one of the biggest consumers of lost water, as well as, one of the harder losses to detect. The main reason for the difficult detection is most softeners are set to run during late evening hours, while we are sleeping so we do not even realize when, or how often, they run. If your water softener is running too often, or is out of cycle, you can be pouring unnecessary water and money down the drain.

**Each step in your water softener cycle ends with water going down the drain.** We recommend that you either personally check, or have water conditioning professional check your softener quarterly.

## IN THE YARD

Check the outside spigots or any other above ground water line or hose for signs of a leak. Signs of an outside leak include a wet spot, actual flow of water over the ground surface, or an area of grass that is much greener than the rest of your yard. Also, look for any leaks around the valve on the hose bibs and backflow preventers.

If your home has an in-ground irrigation system, do not forget to check that often and be sure there are no broken or missing sprinkler heads. Be sure to check the sprinkler system valves for leaks too. Sprinkler heads can lose around **20 gallons per minute**. That's **300 gallons** if the zone runs for only **15 minutes**. Multiply that by **2** times per week, and that's over **2,400 gallons** per month for **one** broken sprinkler head.

Pay attention to your hose. Left unattended, a garden hose can pour out **hundreds of gallons of water in just one hour**. Check all hoses, connectors and spigots regularly to make sure they are in good working order. Replace or repair damaged or leaking hoses, nozzles, spigots and connectors. Equip your hose with a spray nozzle so water flows only as needed. When finished, turn it off at the faucet instead of at the nozzle to avoid extreme water loss in the event of a leak.