**How to maintain and check your meter for a leak**

It is the customers’ responsibility to maintain their water meter. It is always helpful to have your water meter cleaned out; make sure there is no dirt, mud, water, or ants piled up in the meter box, and make sure the grass around the meter box is maintained so it is easy to spot.

**How to check your meter for a leak**:

You will have a cut off valve on your side of the meter (not the one that is on the meter) turn this cut off valve off.

If the red dial on the meter is still turning (even if it’s just a little) then you have a leak.

Do you suspect an underground leak? The dial on your meter would still spin and you should see a large puddle of water somewhere in your yard.

Below is a list of other causes to a high water bill.

**Potential Causes of High Water Bills**

An unusually high water bill is most often caused by a leak or change in water use. Some common causes of high water bills include:

* A leaking toilet, or a toilet that continues to run after being flushed (see additional information below)
* A dripping faucet; a faucet drip can waster 20 gallons of water a day or more
* Filling or topping off a swimming pool
* Watering the lawn, new grass, trees, or gardens; also check for an open hose bib
* Kids home for summer vacations or school holidays; guests
* A broken water pipe or obvious leak; the water heater could also be leaking
* Running water to avoid freezing water pipes during the cold weather

Generally, water consumption is higher during the summer due to watering of lawns, pools, and gardening. Typically, an average family of four uses 4000-5000 gallons of water a month. Here are a few things to check if you get a bill that’s higher than usual.

**Changes in your water use**

Did you have house guests, water your lawn more than usual, or do anything else out of the ordinary in the last month that uses a lot of water? If, so this may account for an increase in your water bill.

**Check for leaks**

Leaks, whether unseen or unfixed, can waste hundreds and even thousands of gallons of water. It is important to routinely check your plumbing and home for leaky faucets, toilets, and outside taps.

**Toilet and faucet leaks**

The most common cause for a high water bill is running water from your toilet. A continuously running toilet can water up to 200 gallons a day. That can double a family’s typical water use, so fix toilet leaks as soon as possible. Some leaks are easy to find, such as a dripping faucet or running toilet. You can usually hear a running toilet, but not always. See the toilet assessment below for help in determining if this is the cause of your high water bill.

**Outdoor and underground leaks**

Leaks can also occur in harder to find places, such as under your house or in the service line between your water meter and your home. Check outdoor spigots and look for wet spots in your yard, which may indicate a leak.

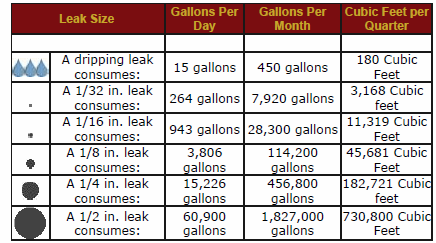
**Do-It-Yourself Toilet Assessment**

First check for the most common leak: a deteriorated or defected flush valve (flapper) ball at the bottom of the toilet tank. If it does not make a tight seal water will leak into the toilet bowl. To check for this:

* Take the lid off of the tank behind the bowl, flush the toilet, then wait for it to fully refill.
* Put a few drops of dye or colored dye tablet in the tank.
* Wait at least 20 minutes; longer if you suspect it is a small leak
* If there is any color in the toilet bowl, there is a leak

The second most common type of leak has to do with an improperly adjusted or broken fill (ballcock) valve. To check for this take the lid off of the toilet tank, flush, and see if water is draining into the overflow tubes when the tank is full.

The following table shows the amount of water that can be lost (and billed to your account) for various size leaks.



**What can I do if My Bill is Unusually High?**

If you receive a bill that you feel is too high, check over the common causes listed above. This may help to pinpoint the source of the high bill. Most often, the Town’s utility billing program will detect unusually high bills, and the Town will either call and notify the customer or send a utility staff member to check the meter for a leak. If you feel that your bill is too high and you have not been contacted by the Town about it, call 337.623.4426. Town staff will schedule for the meter reading to be rechecked. If the meter reading is check and found to be accurate, you may need to contact a plumber or other professional help to determine the source of a leak. Property owners are responsible for all private service water lines from the public water main to the residence and for leaks inside the home.