Finance Department
Water
905-735-1700 x4060
water@welland.ca

Water Conservation Tips

You may unknowingly consume more water than you realize, particularly from your toilet or faucets. They might be leaking or running quietly without you noticing, leading to unintended water usage. Note: the following are suggestions only. Please consult a licensed plumber or other qualified professional to accurately diagnose the cause of leaks. The City is not responsible for internal leaks or their assessment.

How do I check my toilet or sink/faucet for leaks?

Look at your water meter. If you notice the leak indicator or that the digits in the display are increasing, water is flowing through the meter. To identify the source of the flow, turn off the valve under your toilet or sink and recheck the meter. If the indicator has stopped, it means the toilet or sink you just turned off was the cause of the water flow. Repeat this process for all toilets and sinks until you find the source of the flow.

How do I read my meter?

For most homes, the water meter is where the main water line comes into the house. It's usually located right after the main shut-off valve.



An RF meter has a digital LCD display. Some RF meters have a black cover that needs to be opened to see the display.

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To read the display yourself, you must first activate it with a strong flashlight. The flashlight must be a strong light and held long enough to provide enough energy to the solar-powered display; cell phone lights or inexpensive flashlights are too weak.

A leak indicator is located in the top left corner of the display.

- If the indicator is flashing, this indicates an intermittent leak, meaning that water has been used for at least 50 of the 96 15-minute intervals during a 24-hour period.
- If the indicator is solid, this indicates water was used for all 96 15-minute intervals during a 24-hour period.
- If you see a forward arrow with a plus sign (+) flashing very slowly and it doesn't stop flashing, this indicates a very slight flow. Watch the ninth digit in the LCD display and you will see it increase over time. A change in this digit represents a tenth of a liter (100 milliliters) of consumption change.

What if I can't easily check my meter?

Add a dye tablet, a few drops of food colouring, or a tea bag to the back of the toilet tank to test if your toilet is leaking. This will change the water colour in the tank. Wait 15-20 minutes without flushing, then check the toilet bowl. If you see the coloured water from the tank in the bowl, your toilet is leaking.

What might be wrong with my faucet?

Faucet leaks often happen because of worn washers, loose fittings, or O-rings in your sinks, tubs, and showers. These are small, replaceable parts available for purchase at your local hardware store. Outside hoses and sprinklers should always be shut off at the tap, not just the hose nozzle. In the winter, the shut off valve for each hose line should be in the off position and the lines drained to prevent freezing and bursting pipes.

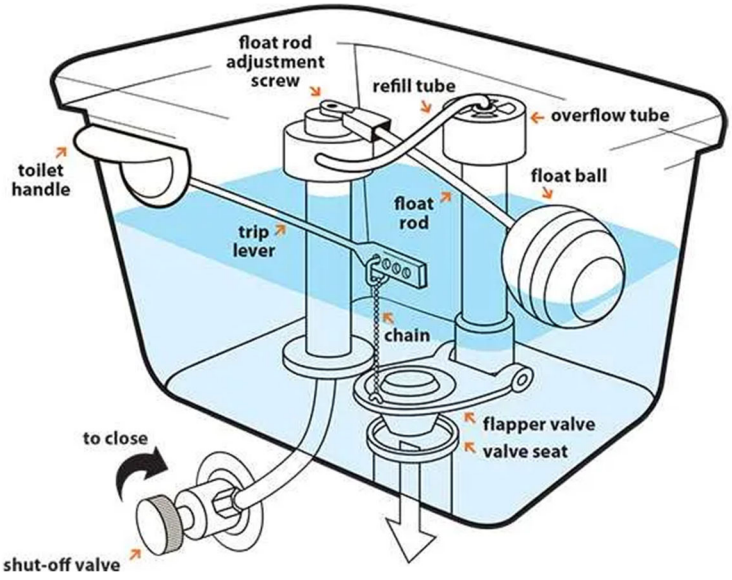
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What might be wrong with my toilet?

There are a number of reasons your toilet might be leaking, but the most common problems are:

- The handle may be loose.
- The flapper valve may have deteriorated or corroded.
- The lever and lift chain are not working properly (chain may be too short/long).
- The water level in the tank is too high and spills into the overflow tube
- The float rod, ballcock, and/or float ball are corroded.

If you're handy, you can repair the leak with parts from your local hardware store, or you can call a licensed plumber to help.



How can I reduce my water usage?

There are many simple ways you can reduce your water usage. For example, you can adjust how much time you spend showering and turn off the tap while you brush your teeth. You can switch to more efficient appliances like low-flow toilets or showerheads. To save water outdoors, ensure your garden hoses are sealed tightly and not leaking. You can also use rain barrels to water your lawn and garden. It's easy to positively impact the environment – and your water bill – with just a few small changes!

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Did you know?

- A lawn sprinkler spraying 19 liters per minute uses 50 percent more water in just one hour than a combination of 10 toilet flushes, two five-minute showers, two dishwasher loads, and a full load of laundry.
- A tap leaking one drop of water per second wastes over 25 liters of water per day.
- Older toilets use up to five times more water to flush than newer toilets. It can mean a difference of up to 30 liters (0.03 cubic meters) per flush compared to 6 liters (0.006 cubic meters) per flush with a newer toilet.
- Residential water meters cannot run faster or over-register more than the amount of water running through them. As meters age, they may *under*-register instead of over-registering. The flow of water through the piston is transmitted through a gearing system to the register, which records the flow in cubic meters.
- The City offers a high water leak adjustment program. If you receive a high water bill that you suspect is the result of a leak, contact water@welland.ca or 905-735-1700 x4060 to request the application form.
    - More information and the application form are available on our website: https://www.welland.ca/for-wellanders/water-and-wastewater/assistance-programs-water-and-wastewater/.