

# You May Have a Leak and Not Even Know It

The water meter can help you identify if you have a leak.

## Meters That Measure in Cubic Metres

Meters which record usage in Cubic Metres (M<sup>3</sup>) have a small “leak detector” triangle. To check these meters:

1. Ensure no water is being used.
2. Watch the meter for a minute or more.
3. If the leak detector is spinning continually, you may have a leak. (In some cases, the arrow may move back and forth very slightly, as water pressure fluctuates.)



## Meters That Measure In Gallons Or Cubic Feet

Older style meters record usage in Gallons or Cubic Feet. To check these meters:

1. Check the meter reading at a set time.
2. Let one hour pass without using any water.
3. Re-check the meter. A higher reading indicates a leak.

# Save Water Save Money

- A continual leak only 1 mm in size can waste almost 440 M<sup>3</sup> (96,700 gal) per year, or around \$800.
- A continual leak only 3 mm in size can waste almost 4,000 M<sup>3</sup> (870,600 gal) per year, or over \$7,000.
- A continual leak 5 mm in size can waste almost 11,000 M<sup>3</sup> (2,420,000 gal) per year, or around \$20,000. One toilet flushing continuously could cause this.

## Remember

- You may not hear or see a “leak”.
- A toilet leak that you may not even hear could cost you **Over \$1,000 a Year!**
- Most leaks are silent, and you will not necessarily see water on the floor!
- Check the meter regularly to assist you in determining if you have a leak. Find and repair all leaks as soon as possible. As you can see from the information above, leaks can be very costly.
- To learn more about what you can do in and around your house to use water more efficiently, visit our website at: [www.durham.ca/waterbilling](http://www.durham.ca/waterbilling).



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# Detect Leaks and Save Money

This fact sheet will help you identify and locate water leaks in your home.



The Regional Municipality of Durham

Finance Department

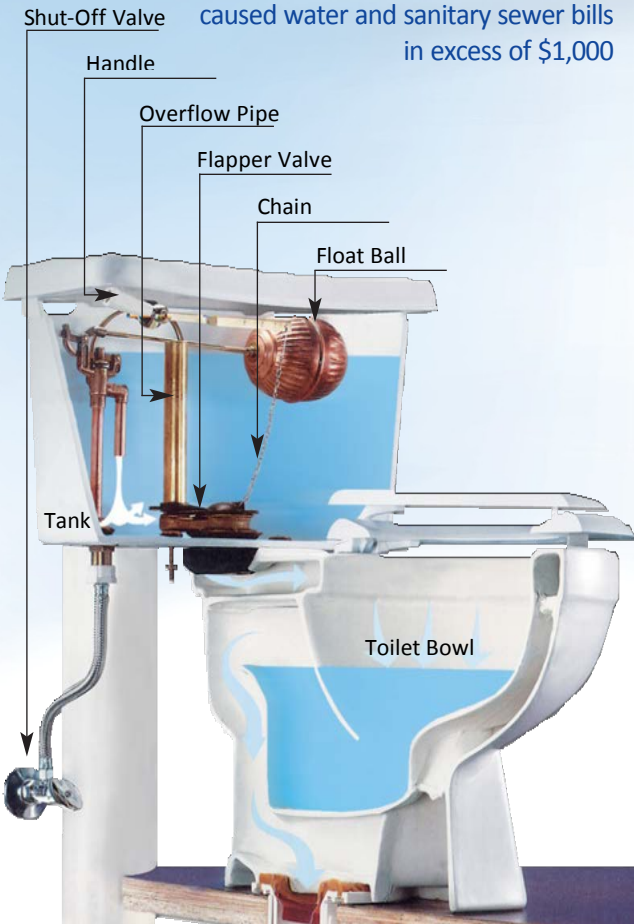
Utility Finance

# Toilet Leaks

Water customers are financially responsible for all water that passes through the water meter, including water and sanitary sewer charges due to plumbing problems.

Toilet leaks are the most common cause of high water and sanitary sewer bills. Most leaks associated with toilets occur due to problems with the Flapper Valve, high Water Levels and Handles.

Toilet related plumbing problems have caused water and sanitary sewer bills in excess of \$1,000



## Leaky Flapper Valve

The flapper is the flush valve seal that serves to control the volume of water passing from the tank to the bowl during the flush cycle. The average life span of a flapper is five years. After this they can lose their resiliency and begin to leak. Chlorine based commercial toilet cleaners (solid or liquid) alter the water's pH level and may damage plastic and rubber parts. To check your toilet for flapper leaks:

1. Remove the tank lid from the toilet.
2. Add five drops of food colouring or a dye tablet to the tank.
3. After about 10 minutes, look in the bowl. If you see coloured water, you have a leak. If the bowl is clear, and all the coloured water remained in the tank, you do not have a leak.

## Water Level in The Tank

The water level in your tank should be set approximately one centimetre below the top of the overflow pipe. To check your toilet's water level:

1. Remove the tank lid from the toilet.
2. Check that the water level is not above the top of the overflow pipe. If it is, you need to adjust the float ball. If the float ball is broken, replace it.

## Toilet Handle Problems

Handles that do not return to the correct position after flushing stop the flapper valve from closing and allow the water to continually run.

1. Make sure the handle's movement is not impeded by decorative tank covers.
2. Jiggle the toilet handle; if the water stops running, the chain or guide wire attached to the handle may be out of alignment.

## Water Use

Three-quarters of all the water you use in your home goes down your bathroom drains, and the biggest single water guzzler is your toilet.

### Breakdown of Indoor Water Use

