

YOUR LEAK REPAIR CHECKLIST

Plumbing leaks waste water and cost you money. Finding and fixing leaks is easy and inexpensive. Start by fixing all visible leaks, both inside and outside your home or business. If you have a drip at a faucet or a running toilet, you usually can repair it yourself with a few simple tools in less than one hour.

- **Toilet Leaks** — Leaks inside your toilet can waste up to 200 gallons per day. **Dye test your toilets before performing any other checks.** Follow the steps in this pamphlet to dye test and fix common problems.
- **Faucet/Showerhead Leaks** — Faucet leaks are easy to spot. Remember to check all sinks and bathtubs and under all sinks.
- **Outdoor Leaks**
 - ✓ Check all hoses and hose bibs (outside faucets) for visible drips or wet spots on the ground. If they are leaking repair or contact a plumber.
 - ✓ If you have an outside irrigation system, visually check it monthly for broken heads and wet spots along lines or near heads. Look at the backflow prevention assembly on your irrigation system; if there is a wet spot on the ground under it, the assembly may need to be repaired.

Invisible Leaks — After you have repaired all visible leaks, **and dye tested your toilets,** check for invisible leaks using the “How to Check For a Water Leak” procedure on the other side of this pamphlet.

The most common invisible leaks are:

- **Irrigation system leaks:** Check for leaking solenoid valves, leaking auto-drain valves or leaking drain valves. Contact a professional landscaper if your system leaks and you can't repair it.
- **Stop and Waste Valves:** Many homes are equipped with stop and waste valves. Check to see that your valve is fully open or closed and that it is not leaking. If your valve is old and hard to operate, we suggest replacing it. Contact a licensed plumber.
- **Crawl Space:** Check all crawl spaces for leaks in pipes, water heater blow offs or valves.
- **Leaking Service Line (from meter to house):** Contact a licensed plumber or excavating contractor to repair or replace your service line.

Toilet Tune-ups

Most toilet leaks are easy to fix. Here are simple repair steps to follow:

- ⇒ **Water Level Adjustment** — If the water level is too high in the toilet tank, it will spill into the overflow tube, causing the water to run. The float can be adjusted by turning the adjustment screw clockwise. If you have a newer model with the float on the ballcock assembly, lower the wire link using the “v” shaped clip. The water should shut off one inch below the top of the overflow tube, or some toilets may have a fill line on the inside of the tank to use as a guide.
- ⇒ **Handle Adjustment** — If you have to jiggle the handle to keep the toilet from “running,” the guide-chain or the handle itself may be sticking. Check the chain adjustment. If it is too tight, loosen it a couple of links. Adjust the nut that secures the handle to the toilet tank. If that does not work, you may need to replace the handle. Remember to take it with you when looking for a replacement.

- ⇒ **Dye Test**— Most people think that their toilet does not leak. To find out if yours does, put a dye tablet or several drops of food coloring into the toilet tank. Wait 15 to 30 minutes and **DO NOT FLUSH!** If colored water appears in the bowl, you have a silent leak and will most likely need to replace the flapper or reduce the water level in the tank. Dye tablets are available at the TCPUD office.
- ⇒ **Flapper Replacement** — If the flapper is worn, it should be removed and replaced. When removing or replacing the flapper, note how the chain is adjusted before the old flapper is removed. You also should check the valve seat for scale or corrosion. If the surface of the valve seat is rough, get some 400-grit wet or dry sandpaper and lightly go over the entire surface. Repeat the process until the surface is smooth. If cleaning does not work, you can purchase a combination flapper/valve seat that is made to fit over the existing valve seat. Make sure to take the existing parts with you when purchasing replacements.
- ⇒ **Still Leaking?** - If none of these steps solve the problem, contact a plumber to repair the toilet. TCPUD also offers rebates for new toilets. See www.tcpud.org for more information.

