

## **BASICS FOR CHECKING WATER USAGE**

If you feel your water consumption is higher than it should be, you should check for leaks. The most common leaks are toilets.

Leaking water produces a high water bill without your knowledge. Some leaks are sporadic and require some detective work. Other leaks are very obvious. It doesn't matter what type of leak you have, they both have solutions.

Some of our customers' water meters are located outside, under the ground. These customers cannot read their own meters to check for leaks.

However, if you have an inside meter (usually in the basement near the water heater or main turn-off valve), or the utility room for a slab home, checking for leaks is easy.

- Be sure no water is in use.
- Look at the meter. If the red dial is moving at all, water is running in your home.
  - If that is the case, turn off your toilets one at a time and check the meter after each turn-off.
  - If a toilet is leaking, this process will allow you to pinpoint the source.
  - If the dial continues to move even after all the toilets are off, you should double check your faucets and hose bibbs.
- Take a reading before retiring at night. Do not use any water during the night.
- Read your meter again in the morning. If the readings match, there is no consistent leak at your property.

## **OUTSIDE FAUCETS**

- Hose bibbs and outside faucets are often left running -- particularly in the spring and summer when residents are away. It is important to prevent someone from using your water without your permission. When leaving your home for an extended period and in the winter, turn your outside faucet off from the inside valve to protect against water loss.
- Outside faucets are sometimes left on for protracted periods of time. Common garden hoses can use up to 1,000 gallons per hour.

## **TOILETS**

Sometimes toilet leaks aren't that obvious. The following are some simple clues that you may have a problem:

- If you have to jiggle the handle to make a toilet stop running
- If you regularly hear sounds from a toilet that is not being used
- If a toilet periodically turns the water on ("runs") for 15 seconds or so without touching the handle. Check the float-it is often the problem. if the float doesn't stop the toilet from filling, bend the rod down.

*Even if your toilet does not display any of the above symptoms, it could still be leaking.*

*These silent leaks can go undetected for long periods of time, but a simple dye test will detect a leak.*

**Dye test for Toilets** All you need do is drop dye or food coloring into the tank, wait 30 minutes and if the water in the bowl contains dye, then the toilet is leaking.

## **OTHER APPLIANCES to consider**

- Water powered sump pumps
- Humidifiers attached to the furnace
- Water softeners cycling continuously
- Outdoor lines for irrigation system or pools

*Also note: Visitors such as young children may use sinks or faucets and cause water to run for long periods!*