

HOW TO DETERMINE IF YOU HAVE A WATER LEAK

The best method for determining whether a leak exists is to take actual water meter readings. This method checks the entire internal plumbing system in your home or business for water leaks. Take a water meter reading just before going to bed or some other time when no one will be using water for several hours. Take another meter reading in the morning before any water is used or after a few hours of no use. In theory, the two readings should be the same. If they are not and you cannot account for the use by a humidifier, ice cube maker, toilet flush, or water softener, you have a leak. At this point, further investigation is needed.

TESTING TOILETS FOR LEAKS

Toilets are the number one source of water leaks inside the home so this is the best place to start a leak detection. Because a toilet leak can waste up to 3,000 gallons of water per day, it is important to regularly test all toilets in the home and quickly repair any leaks you discover.

To determine if a toilet is leaking, place some dye such as food coloring, Kool-Aid, cola or brewed coffee in the tank of the toilet. Wait 15-30 minutes and do not flush or use the toilet during the test. If you see any of the color in the bowl of the toilet, then you know you have a leak that needs to be repaired.

If you discover that you have a toilet leak, make sure the lift chain is free of kinks and that you don't have any mineral or sediment buildup around your valves that might prevent them from sealing properly. You can also use the adjustment screw on the overflow pipe to lower the water level in the tank to keep it from flowing into the overflow pipe. Most overflow pipes have a line on the pipe that indicates where the water level needs to be. If the flapper valve or plunger ball isn't properly sealing at the bottom of the toilet, you will also get leaks. Parts are available at your local hardware store to replace these items.

OTHER COMMON SOURCES OF LEAKS

All water faucets (both inside & outside)

Water heaters

Ice makers

Water softeners

Outdoor sprinkler systems

Automatic humidifiers

Pools

Most repairs can be done by an experienced "do-it-yourselfer". If you are not sure you can handle the job, call a plumber. It is important to stop the leak. Leaks left uncorrected often increase in volume.

Water leaks are costly. Even a small leak, running continuously, can add hundreds of dollars to your water bill. This information is provided as a courtesy, with hopes of action on your part that may minimize an unnecessary waste of water and expense to you.

Provided By:

City of Marquette

300 W Baraga Ave Marquette, MI 49855

Office: (906) 228-0420