

LEAK DETECTION TIPS

The Lake County Department of Utilities



Often times, the biggest culprit of a high water bill comes from water leaks that go undetected. You may not even know that you have a leak, because not all leaks are visible—far too often they may be underground, concealed or silent. And some leaks may be occurring every day before your very eyes. Have you ever noticed that dripping faucet or spigot? Did you know that a slow drip from a faucet may waste up to 15-20 gallons of water per day? Or what about that toilet that always seems to be running? A leaky toilet wastes between 300 gallons (slow leak) and 60,000 gallons (running toilet) per month. And an unattended leak can worsen and cause significant damage to your property, not to mention a very expensive water bill. Since most leaks are metered, below are some tips to help you detect a suspected leak:

STEP 1: Locate your water meter. If it is inside your home, it can typically be found in your basement or crawl space. If your meter is located outside, you should not attempt to open the vault lid; rather, call The Lake County Department of Utilities to check for possible leaks.



STEP 2: Turn off all faucets and appliance that use water.



STEP 3: Most meters have a small red dial known as a leak indicator (note the red dial in the right corner of the illustration to the left). When the water is off, this dial should not be moving. If it is moving when the water is off, this is an indication you may have a leak. Another approach is to observe the dials on the meter. Typically you will have a straight-reading meter, which resembles an odometer in a car. If the dials on the meter are moving after the water has been turned off, this is another sign you have a leak. Ideally, it is best to check the reading on your water meter, wait a couple of hours, and then check the reading again to see if digits have moved. It is important to remember not to use any water during this period of time. If you have an outdoor meter, please to not attempt to open the vault lid to check you meter; rather, contact the Lake County Department of Utilities, and a service representative will be sent out to your property.

Once you determined you have a leak, now it is time to identify the source. Usually, the biggest offenders are faucets, toilets, dishwashers, washing machines, refrigerators with ice makers and water dispensers, pools and spas, sprinkler systems, old valves, pipe joints, and worn plumbing fixtures. Although the exact location of a leak may not always be immediately obvious, signs to look for are wet, warped or discolored stains on your ceilings, floors, walls, and woodwork. Also, pay close attention to any portions of your yard or driveway with puddles that never seem to dry up—this can indicate an underground leak.

Replacement parts and repair kits can be inexpensive and are available at most home improvement stores. If you do not feel comfortable performing the repair yourself, it is recommended to contact a trusted plumber. Even if you do not suspect a leak, consider using the above approach a couple times a year just to be sure.

Please contact The Lake County Department of Utilities at (440) 350-2070 or (440) 918-2070 if you have any questions.

Always remember, catching a leak early on can save a lot of water and money from going down the drain!

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