



Residents encouraged to investigate for household leaks

This week marks the 11th Annual National Fix a Leak Week, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is encouraging residents to improve their water-use efficiency.

According to the EPA, water leaks account for more than one trillion gallons of water wasted each year in U.S. homes, and the average household loses approximately 10,00 gallons of water annually due to leaks. That's equivalent to 270 loads of laundry.

Here are some tips to help you detect leaks around your home:

Leak Detection:

- A good method to check for leaks is to examine your winter water use. It's likely that a family of four has a serious leak problem if its winter water use exceeds 12,000 gallons per month.
- Check your water meter before and after a two-hour period when no water is being used. If the meter does not read exactly the same, you probably have a leak.
- One way to find out if you have a toilet leak is to place a drop of food coloring in the toilet tank. If the color shows up in the bowl within 10 minutes without flushing, you have a leak. Make sure to flush immediately after this experiment to avoid staining the tank.

Faucets and Showerheads:

- A leaky faucet that drips at the rate of one drip per second can waste more than 3,000 gallons per year. That's the amount of water needed to take more than 180 showers!
- Leaky faucets can be fixed by checking faucet washers and gaskets for wear and replacing them if necessary. If you are replacing a faucet, look for the WaterSense® label.
- A showerhead leaking at 10 drips per minute wastes more than 500 gallons per year. That's the amount of water it takes to wash 60 loads of dishes in your dishwasher.
- Most leaky showerheads can be fixed by ensuring a tight connection using pipe tape and a wrench. If you are replacing a showerhead, look for one that has earned the WaterSense® label.

Toilets:

- If your toilet is leaking, the cause is often an old or faulty toilet flapper. Over time, this inexpensive rubber part decays, or minerals build up on it. It's usually best to replace the whole rubber flapper—a relatively easy, inexpensive do-it-yourself project that pays for itself in no time.
- If you do need to replace the entire toilet, look for the WaterSense® label. If the average family replaces its older, inefficient toilets with new WaterSense® labeled ones, it could save 13,000 gallons of water per year. Retrofitting the house could save the family nearly \$2,900 in water and wastewater bills over the lifetime of the toilets.

Outdoors:

- An irrigation system should be checked each spring before use to make sure it was not damaged by frost or freezing.
- An irrigation system that has a leak 1/32nd of an inch in diameter (about the thickness of a dime) can waste about 6,300 gallons of water per month.
- To ensure that your in-ground irrigation system is not leaking water, consult an irrigation professional certified by a WaterSense® labeled program.
- Check your garden hose for leaks at its connection to the spigot. If it leaks while you run your hose, replace the nylon or rubber hose washer and ensure a tight connection to the spigot using pipe tape and a wrench.

To encourage people to participate in Fix-A-Leak Week, Golden State Water Company is offering Fix-A-Leak Kits to customers while supplies last. Each kit contains leak-detecting dye tablets, hose washers, a drip measure vial and instructions. Golden State Water also offers online resources, including several tutorials to educate customers about fixing leaks and using water responsibly at their properties. To learn more about water-use efficiency resources, programs and rebates you are encouraged to visit www.gswater.com . For more information, visit www.epa.gov/watersense.

#