



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

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BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS

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Fix-A-Leak-Week Begins March 20

Household leaks are more than a drop in the bucket

March 20, 2023 (Wellesley, MA) - Tiny drips of water can add up quickly. That's the message from the Wellesley Department of Public Works Water Division, which is urging local residents and businesses to fix common water leaks in honor of national "Fix a Leak Week."

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 10 percent of homes have leaks that can waste 90 gallons or more of water per day - enough to fill 1,440 glasses. Household leaks not only waste a tremendous amount of water, they also damage your home and garden. A leaking or running toilet is the most common type of leak found inside homes, followed by dripping faucets and showerheads. Outdoor leaks can be easy to miss but shouldn't be ignored because the amount of water wasted can be significant.

Leak Facts and Tips *(When in doubt, consult a professional plumber)*

- **Leaking toilets.** This can waste 200 gallons of water per day (enough to wash seven loads of laundry every day for a month). Chances are if you can hear your toilet running you have an issue. To confirm a leak add a little food coloring or a dye tab to the tank and wait about 15 minutes. If there is colored water in the bowl, you have a leak. The cause is often a worn out toilet flapper, which can break down over time. Turn off the water to your toilet and replace your old flapper with the same or a universal model, typically found at a home improvement store.
- **Leaking faucets.** Just one drip per second can waste nearly 58 gallons per week (enough to wash nearly 15 loads of dishes in your dishwasher), while a showerhead leaking 10 drips per minute can waste nearly 10 gallons per week (enough for over 150 glasses of water). Faucet and showerhead leaks are typically caused by worn-out washers or loose connections. Turn off the water to the problem area, check washers for wear and replace them if necessary. Be sure to create a tight connection using pipe tape and a wrench, if needed.
- **Sprinkler system leaks.** Irrigation leaks waste about 6,300 gallons of water per month (enough for over seven loads of laundry every day for a month). The most common outdoor leaks are caused by broken or loose pipes under your lawn or garden, broken sprinkler heads or loose connection between your garden hose and spigot. Plan ahead! When tending to your lawn or garden, keep an eye out for usual wet or soft spots that can indicate a broken pipe or loose connection, check your sprinklers once a month and

replace any broken nozzles and regularly check and tighten your garden hose's connection to the spigot using pipe tape and a wrench, if needed.

Visit the [Water Division webpages](#) for more information on [Fix-a-Leak Week](#), water conservation resources and tips.

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