

### **Some Interesting Facts and Statistics:**

The typical family uses about 70% of their water in the bathroom. This is partly because water is used at a faster “flow rate” in the bathroom than in any other area of the home. Toilets and showers have a flow rate of 5-7 gallons per minute; dishwashers and clothes washers use less than three gallons per minute.

Toilet.....	5 to 7 gallons per flush (Non low-flow toilet)
Shower.....	5 to 7 gallons per minute (Non low-flow shower)
Bathtub.....	36 to 60 gallons per bath
Dishwasher.....	10 to 25 gallons per cycle
Washing machine....	20 to 45 gallons per load

#### **Total Home Water Usage:**

<b>Outdoor Use</b>	<b>60%</b>
<b>Indoor Use</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>Kitchen</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>5%</b>

#### **Indoor Water Usage:**

<b>Bathroom</b>	<b>70%</b>
<b>Laundry</b>	<b>15%</b>

# STOP THE LEAKS!

#### **Why is my water bill high so high?**

A high water bill may indicate you have a leak. Even a small leak can waste enough water for you to notice an increase on your bill. If there is a leak anywhere within your plumbing system, the person named on the utility bill must pay for the water used. Fix your leaks promptly to avoid paying for them each month. Did you know:

- a 1/4" leak wastes 393,833 gallons\* in one month.
- a 3/16" leak wastes 222,000 gallons\* in one month.
- a 1/8" leak wastes 98,666 gallons\* in one month.
- a 1/16" leak wastes 24,666 gallons\* in one month.

\*at 60 pounds of pressure

#### **Ideas to help you find water leaks**

Most leaks are easy to find, but some can go undetected. Here are some ideas to help find a water leak in your home.

##### **Toilets**

- Listen and look for running water.
- Put a few drops of food coloring into the tank. Or pick up free dye tablets at a Utility Billing Office located at 625 5<sup>th</sup> Street. If color shows up in the bowl within ten minutes, the valve or support assembly may need to be replaced.
- See if the ball valve drops squarely into the drain opening. If not, clean it out or replace the ball valve if it is worn.
- Check the flush handle to see if it is stuck in the flush position.
- Bend the float arm to lower the water level to at least one-half inch below the top of the overflow tube.
- Replace the overflow tube if it has holes below the water level.

##### **Faucets, Bathtubs and Showers**

- Replace worn gaskets and washers.
- Replace washer-less faucets.

- Tighten waterline connections and valves.

**Air Conditioner/Humidifier**

- Check for water leaks.

**Water Heater**

- Replace the pressure and temperature valve, if leaking.
- Tighten the drain valve.

**Water Softener**

- Look for water drips underneath or in back of the machine.
- Listen for running water.
- Contact your water softener representative for service and repair information.

**Dishwasher/Clothes Washer**

- Look for water drips or stains underneath or in back of the machine.

**Water Service Connection**

- Look for drips or wet areas in the crawl space.
- Place a screwdriver on the service line and listen. No noise means water is not running.

**Outside Faucets**

- Replace worn gaskets and washers.

**Sprinkler System**

- Disconnect hoses from outside faucets to protect against freeze damage.
- Winterize your sprinkler system according to the system's instructions.
- Check for any damage to sprinkler heads.
- Make sure that all drain plugs are closed.

**Need help?**

- If you think you have a leak but can't find one, call the Utility Billing Office at 642-1327 to perform a leak test. If the meter is found to be faulty it will be replaced at no charge but a service fee will be charged if there are no problems with the meter. If the fault is not the meters, you may need to call a plumber.

**If you do not have a water leak and your bill seems high, consider these questions:**

- Did you use more water keeping the grass green?
- Did you go on vacation and leave someone else in charge of your lawn watering?
- Do you have an automatic sprinkler system with a broken head?
- Have you put in a new lawn, sprinkler system or pool recently?
- Were your children playing with the water?
- Did you do extra loads of laundry before or after a vacation?
- Did you have friends or relatives staying with you?

**Cold  
Weather  
Tips**



**PROTECT YOUR WATER METER**

Freezing conditions can damage water meters. If your meter freezes because you neglected to take simple steps to protect it from the cold, the City's Water Department will repair or replace the meter at your expense.

## PROTECT YOUR PIPES

**If service lines or pipes freeze, it is the homeowner's responsibility to have them repaired.** Homeowners can take the following precautions to keep water in pipes from freezing:

- **Insulate your pipes.** If a sink is installed against an outside wall, insulate the wall and open cabinets beneath the sink to allow warm air to reach the pipes.
- Remove water hoses from outside connections, turn off water to outdoor faucets and, when possible, drain the pipes.

## IF YOUR METER FREEZES

To thaw a frozen meter or pipe, use a small space heater to warm the area or aim a hair dryer or heat lamp at the frozen area. **Never thaw a frozen meter or pipe with an open flame.** It is a fire hazard and can create a steam explosion. If you are unsuccessful at thawing and your meter or pipes appear to be damaged, contact a licensed plumber.

## REGULATIONS FOR INSTALLING METERS AT TRAILER PARKS

Meters will be required to be located under the trailer. All meters to be installed must be off the ground. We recommend the meter be at least 6 inches off the ground and supported by a concrete block or 2" x 6" block of wood. **In order to avoid freezing, heat tape should be wrapped around the meter and covered by insulation.** Installations have to be within 12 inches of outside skirting. All meters must have an access panel on the skirting to be able to reach the meter. On all installations, the shut-off valve has to be within 6 inches of the water meter on the live side of the water line. Installations will be inspected by the Water Department.

**If the Water Department has to repair or replace your water meter, it is the homeowner's responsibility to re-insulate and re-install the heat tape on the water meter.**