

# Leak Detection

Common Household Water Leaks

**CRD** | Water Conservation



# The Cost of Water Leaks

*Water is a precious resource. Doing everything in our power to prevent water waste helps conserve this vital resource while saving money. Two common sources of water waste are leaks and the over-watering of lawns and gardens.*

## Leaking Toilets

High volume water leaks often come from toilets. They are hard to detect and are usually caused by worn or misaligned parts. A toilet that continues to run after flushing could be wasting 20-40 litres of water per hour — that's 175,000 to 350,000 litres per year, enough water to fill a swimming pool and, if unattended, could cost up to \$726 per year.

## Finding a Toilet Leak

To check for a toilet leak, use a CRD dye tablet or food colouring. Carefully remove the toilet tank lid. Place a CRD dye tablet or some food colouring in the tank. Wait about 15 minutes without flushing. After 15 minutes check the water in your toilet bowl. If the water is coloured, you have a leak. Toilet repairs may require the assistance of a plumber. For a free CRD dye tablet and Indoor Guide to Household Water Efficiency call 250.474.9684.

## Water Saving Toilets

For additional water and dollar savings replace your water guzzling toilet(s) with a 4.8 litre or high efficiency (HET) model. An average household can save up to 30,000 litres of water a year which could equate up to \$62 per year.

## Faucets & Showerheads

Leaking faucets and showerheads are also big water wasters and worn washers or seats are the most likely cause of leaks in these fixtures. Repairing leaky faucets is usually a straightforward and inexpensive job, and well worthwhile because a little drip can waste significant water and money.



## Leaking Faucets & an Intermittent Drip

An intermittent drip from your faucet or showerhead can waste more than 35,000 litres of water or (35 cubic meters) a year, costing up to \$72. This amount of wasted water would fill a bathtub 184 times! The costs can add up quickly!

A leaking service line or pipe in your home can add up to serious waste. A small hole in a pipe (1.5mm) wastes 280,000 litres of water in a three-month period. Continual leaking from this size hole could cost you about \$580 in that three month time period. This is enough water to do about 900 loads of laundry! If leaks are suspected, contact a plumber to assist you.

*Remember if dripping water is hot water your energy dollars are also going down the drain!*

## Water System Leaks

Whether you use an in-ground irrigation system or a single oscillating head sprinkler, check carefully for leaks. The average garden hose delivers 27 litres of water a minute, so a split in the hose or a poor coupling could be wasting large amounts of water. Make sure the outdoor faucet is turned off after each use, even small drips can add up to big waste. Use garden water as wisely as possible. Consider micro/drip irrigation, and use a watering can whenever possible. Ensure that your hose is equipped with a shut-off nozzle. Attend a free CRD homeowner irrigation workshop. Visit [www.crd.bc.ca/workshops](http://www.crd.bc.ca/workshops) to learn more. A leak in your in-ground irrigation system is less noticeable than one in a hose, and can waste even greater amounts of water. If you think your in-ground system may have a leak, check for wet patches in your lawn that do not dry. Contact your irrigation contractor for a system check-up.

## Avoid Over-Watering

In-ground irrigation systems are convenient and if properly installed and maintained can provide efficient lawn irrigation. Sprinkler systems can use a lot of water. Most spray or rotor sprinkler heads use between 7 and 11 litres of water per minute, per head. These systems should operate for a maximum of 10 minutes - twice a week - on designated lawn watering days.

A single oscillating head sprinkler uses 27 litres a minute. Watering your lawn for an hour uses about the same amount of water as five dishwasher loads. If you run your sprinkler for five hours a week the cost is about \$72 per month.

*Calculations based on the CRD Juan de Fuca Water Distribution Services 2018 retail rate of \$2.07 per m<sup>3</sup>.*

# Be A Leak Detective

The best way to check for overall leaks is to use your water meter. Follow these simple steps to determine if you have a leak.

1. Shut off all your water-using appliances and fixtures on the property. These include all water taps inside and outside the house, showers, sinks, washing machines, and any appliances that use water, e.g. fridge.
2. Locate your water meter. If there appears to be a leak in your meter box contact CRD Water Services at **250.474.9600** or your municipal water department.
3. If you have a leak, you will need to play detective to find the source. The most likely culprits are toilets, faucets, showerheads, service lines and sprinkler systems. If you are unable to determine the source of the leak, you may need to contact a plumber.
4. You must contact your municipal water office to advise them of the leak. Typically you have no more than 30 days from your last invoice date to detect, repair and submit a leak application to the office. Please contact your local municipal office for information.
5. For more information, visit **[www.crd.bc.ca/water](http://www.crd.bc.ca/water)**



Making a difference...together

## Capital Regional District

625 Fisgard Street, Victoria, BC V8W 2S6

T: 250.474.9684

[www.crd.bc.ca/water](http://www.crd.bc.ca/water)