



# Fix a Leak Week

Find a Leak...Fix a Leak.

## Act quickly to save \$ and water!

### *Residential water leaks:*

- Increase your water bill (sometimes by several hundred dollars per month) until fixed — includes regular rates plus penalties
- Waste many thousands of gallons of our precious water (typically from 10,000 to 60,000 per leak per month!)

## Find a Leak:

### • Look at your meter:



Most meters have some indicator that will spin or revolve whenever water is running. If no water is known to be on, this will tell you if water is flowing through your meter.

*About 95% of residential meters are located near the front sidewalk or property line bordering the street. Some are in alleys. It often says "Water Meter" on the plate covering the meter. You can usually pry the lid open with a screwdriver.*

***Please check your local ordinances to be certain there is no penalty for opening your meter box.** Use a wet rag/paper towel to clean the meter face.*

### • Review your water bills:

- Tracking your water use over several months can help you recognize that a leak is occurring and how large it might be.
- Water use should be low in the winter months (Dec-Feb) — homes typically use from 2 to 8 units in those months, depending on the number of people in the home (1,500 to 6,000 gallons/month).

### • Look and listen to every water-using feature of your home

Open irrigation covers, put your ear on faucets, lift toilet tank lids, and walk through your yard looking for anything unusually wet.

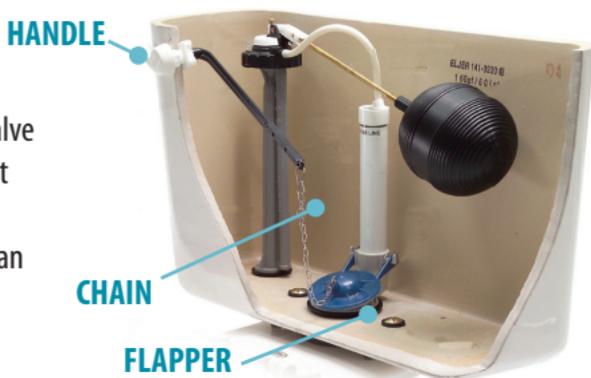
# Fix a Leak:

The most common sources of leaks in the home in order of likelihood are:

## ► Toilets

- Bad flapper or bad fill valve
  - Water motion in toilet
  - Hear water running
  - Water level higher than the overflow tube
- Broken handle
- Loose chain

**Fix It:** If meter shows water flowing then turn off toilet valves, one at a time. Re-observe meter to see if movement stops. Tighten or replace suspect parts.



## ► Irrigation system

- Valve box or delivery system

**Fix It:** Lift valve box cover, walk areas covered by irrigation system, check heads.

## ► Swamp cooler

- Water line or float turn-off

**Fix It:** Turn supply line off — see if meter stops, replace line or float if needed.



## ► Main line (From meter to house)

- Aging pipes can rust or break — sometimes source is tree roots

**Fix It:** If house has a main shutoff valve, turn it off and see if the meter is still running.

## ► Water softener

- Valves stay open all the time — you can hear it running in the daytime.

**Fix It:** Close the "Bypass" valve.

## ► Appliances, incoming water hoses or faucet handles

**Fix It:** Observe, replace washers in valve stems, and replace bad valves or hoses.

For leaks you can't find or repair yourself, contact your local water utility to see if they offer leak detection assistance.

For more information visit [www.ose.state.nm.us/wucp\\_fixaleak.html](http://www.ose.state.nm.us/wucp_fixaleak.html)