

## Looking for more ways to save water indoors?

- Replace your toilet with a high efficiency, low flow toilet that uses only 1.6 gallons per flush. On the average, toilets use 3 to 5 gallons per flush.
- Place a plastic container filled with sand in an older model toilet tank and you can save water with every flush.
- Don't use your toilet as a wastebasket. Dead bugs and used facial tissue should go in the trashcan, not the toilet.
- Turn off the faucet while you brush your teeth, shave or wash your face and you can save an average of 5 gallons.
- Shorten your shower time. Most showers use about 5 gallons per minute.
- Install a high-efficiency, low flow showerhead that uses no more than 2.5 gallons of water per minute.
- When taking a bath, close the tub drain before turning on the water. Fill the tub halfway or less. A full tub can hold more than 50 gallons of water.
- Run the dishwasher and washing machine only when it's fully loaded. Most dishwashers use between 12-15 gallons of water, full or empty. When loading the dishwasher, scrape food off dishes and pots instead of rinsing them.

**A silent toilet leak can waste more than 50 gallons a day**

## Looking for more ways to save water indoors?

- If you wash dishes by hand, fill the sink or a pan with soapy water instead of letting the faucet run while soaping dishes. Don't let the faucet run while rinsing off dishes. Rinse dishes in a filled sink or pan of water.
- Install a low flow faucet aerator on your kitchen faucet that uses no more than 2.5 gallons of water per minute.
- Instead of letting the water run until the water is cold enough to drink, keep a container of drinking water in the refrigerator.



For more water conservation tips, call TVWD's Water Conservation Department at (503) 848-3056 or visit [www.tvwd.org](http://www.tvwd.org)



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# Even You Can Fix A Leaky Toilet

Not sure if your toilet leaks?  
Use this handy dye tablet to find out!



**We Want You To Save Water And Money**

# Even You Can Fix A Leaky Toilet

Toilet leaks can be silent but costly, wasting hundreds of gallons of water in a very short time. Be a leak seeker. Here is a short guide to help you determine what might be causing your toilet to leak, as well as a few tips on how to fix them.

## Once a year, test your toilet for leaks:

1. Remove the tank's cover carefully.
  2. Drop leak dye tablets or 5-6 drops of food coloring into the tank.
  3. Wait several minutes.
- If the bowl has color, you have a leak.

Before attempting to fix toilet leaks:

- Turn off the water at the toilet's base (1).
- Flush until your toilet tank is empty.
- Soak up excess water in the tank with a sponge, then check the following parts:

## Flapper or Flush Valve

Your Flapper or Flush Valve (2) may not be seating properly on the Valve Seat (3), or it may need replacement. This is typically the cause of running toilets. Over time, the valve's rubber material deteriorates because it is constantly underwater. If you gently rub the valve and get streaks on your fingers, you should replace the valve.

**To Fix:** Check the Valve Seat (3) for corrosion and clean it if necessary. Turn the water inlet (1) back on and try flushing. If the Flush Valve (2) still won't seat properly, check the Guide Wire (4). It may be misaligned. Adjust the

Guide Wire to make sure the Valve (2) falls easily into place.

If the Flush Valve/Flapper Ball (2) seems worn or in poor shape, try replacing it with the appropriate brand (take the old part with you). You should be able to find replacements in most home improvement stores. Simple do-it-yourself installation instructions should be on the packaging.

## Overflow Tube

If the water level in the tank is too high, it may spill into the Overflow Tube (5) continually, creating a large leak that is difficult to hear. The correct water level is about a half inch to one inch below the top of the Overflow Tube (5).

**To Fix:** Bend the Float Arm (6) downward gently until the water fills to the proper level after you flush. Be sure to check that the Float Arm is securely screwed in so that the Arm won't rotate.

If the water level is too low, you may not get an efficient flush. Carefully bend the Float Arm (6) upward.

It may be that you'll need to replace the Float Ball (7) if it has filled with water or replace the Float Ball Shut Off Valve (8).

## Guide Wire

If you have to jiggle the handle to keep the toilet from running, it may be a misaligned Flush Valve (2) or loose handle (9).

**To Fix:** Clean and adjust the Guide Wire (4) and/or tighten the nut that holds the toilet handle (9) to the tank. Turn the water inlet (1) back on and try flushing. If that doesn't work, the handle may need to be replaced.

## Shut-Off Valve

If the water that refills the tank won't shut off, you may have a broken Shut-Off Valve in the Ballcock Assembly (10.) Water will just keep spilling into the Overflow Tube (5).

**To Fix:** Know your limitations. Unless you're an accomplished plumber, call a professional. At least you identified and isolated the problem.

If your leaky toilet can't be fixed, replace it with one that uses 1.6 gallons per flush. New low flow toilets are designed to flush efficiently with very little water, and are now required by law in the State of Oregon.

**Do not take on toilet repairs unless you feel quite confident in your ability to make these repairs. TVWD will not be responsible for any damage to your toilet due to faulty repairs.**

