

People are often surprised how much water is used during daily activities around the home. Think about how many times you do the following activities during the course of a day to calculate approximately how much water you're really using!

ACTIVITY	WATER USED	ALTERNATIVE
Ice maker	½ gal/load	Make sure functioning properly
Shower	4 gal/min	Reduce time & install low flow head
Bathtub	30 gal/min	Limit use
Dishwasher	14 gal/load	Run full loads & limit pre-rinsing by dry scraping
Clothes washer	50 gal/load	Run full loads & match water setting
Bathroom faucet	2 gal/min	Turn off water to brush teeth or wash hands, install low flow aerator
Humidifier	Varies	Use only when necessary
Water softener	80 gal per regeneration	Check filters/ system often to optimize usage
Hose/irrigation ✓ ½" ✓ ¾" ✓ ¾"	✓ 360 gal/hr ✓ 600 gal/hr ✓ 1140 gal/hr	Limit use, install rain barrel for watering plants
Leaks ✓ Drop/sec ✓ Steady drip ✓ Trickle	✓ 7 gal/day ✓ 20 gal/day ✓ 200 gal/day	Check for leaks often in indoor & outdoor systems

Drinking water is a precious resource to be used wisely. As your drinking water provider, we work hard to detect and eliminate leaks in your water distribution system. Leaks can occur inside your home as well. Finding and repairing leaks saves both water and money.

Did you know the average person uses about 100 gallons of water per day?

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Using More Water Than Expected?

If your bill indicates more water use than expected, follow this guide to check whether you are USING or LOSING water!



Using Your Water Meter Head for Leak Detection

All water services in the City of Crystal Lake are metered. Meter readings determine the water and sewer charges on your monthly bill. The meter is also a great tool for checking your home for leaks. The water meter is usually located in the basement or a utility closet. Most meters have a small snowflake or triangle-shaped dial. This dial will spin rapidly when water is running. If water is dripping, the dial may move slowly. This dial can help you determine if you have a leak in your internal plumbing.



Step 1 – Stop using water:

Turn off all the water fixtures inside and outside your home that use water and wait approximately 5 minutes. Don't forget about your ice maker, water softener and humidifier!

Step 2 – Watch the meter:

Your water meter might have a snowflake or triangle-shaped leak detection dial. If the dial and your meter hand are moving, water is running somewhere in your system and you may have a leak.

Step 3 – Find the leak/determine how much water you are using:

If you have a leak, you might be able to determine its location by using one of the leak checks listed below. If the leak detection or meter hand did not change position when the water fixtures were off, you might actually be **USING** more water than you expect. Look at the chart of common household activities on the other side of this page to estimate your daily water usage. The average person uses approximately 100 gallons of water per day.

LEAK CHECKS FOR INTERNAL PLUMBING

LOCATION	LEAK CHECK PROCEDURE
Faucets	Check every faucet in your home for leaks (above and below the sinks). Even a slow leak can waste HUNDREDS of gallons of water a day!
Toilets	A silent leak in your toilet can waste several THOUSAND gallons per month. To check if your toilet leaks: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remove the lid from the tank & place 3 or 4 drops of ordinary food coloring into the tank. 2. Do not flush or disturb the toilet for two hours or longer. 3. At the end of the waiting period, if the color you placed in the tank shows up in the bowl, you have a leak. 4. Leaks are frequently caused by a defective flush valve. A flush valve is a flap or ball plunger which acts as a stopper at the bottom of your tank. See your local hardware dealer or plumber to obtain an inexpensive & easy to install replacement valve kit.
Appliances	Check all visible internal pipe work around your home and any water-using appliances for leaks.
Softeners/Humidifiers	Check the units to make sure systems are functioning properly and filters are changed on a regular basis.
Seasonal plumbing/RPZ's	Make sure RPZ(s) are in good working order – the state requires an annual certification of these devices. If season plumbing such as pools and irrigation systems are left in place through the winter, inspect them for leaks when turning them on for the season.