



## Leak Detection Checklist

An unusually high water bill is most often caused by a change in water use or a leak. Often times we do not realize how the simplest things can use so much water. Volusia County Utilities understands your concerns and would like to help you determine the reason why your bill is higher than usual. You may be able to determine the reason that your bill is higher than expected if you answer “yes” to any of the questions on the Leak Detection Checklist.

If you complete the checklist and have determined the cause of your high bill, you will want to take the necessary steps to correct the issue as soon as you can to prevent another high bill. Once you have corrected the issue, you may qualify for an adjustment. Please go to our website, [www.volusia.gov/water](http://www.volusia.gov/water), to fill out the Leak adjustment request form.

### Before You Begin:

Make sure all of the water faucets and water using appliances in your home are shut off. Locate your water meter, which is usually between your house and your neighbors. If you are not certain where your meter is located, you can contact our office for the location that is noted on your account. Identify which meter is yours and read the register on it like you would a car odometer from left to right. If your numbers are digital (far right meter), the format is 1234567.89. The leak indicator on the digital meter is a circle. If there is a plus sign in the middle of this circle, there is water going through your meter. If your numbers are analog (left two meters), the format is 1234567.8. The leak indicator on the analog meter is a red dial with a black line on it that will spin if there is water going through your meter. For your bill, we read number positions 1-4, but for leak detection, you will need to log all numbers from the meter.



Compare the first four numbers to the read on your bill. Current meter reading \_\_\_\_\_ - meter reading on bill \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_ gallons used since your bill date. If the leak indicator is indicating water usage, locate your house valve and turn it off. If the meter stops spinning, the leak is in

or under your home. If the meter does not stop spinning, the leak is between the meter and the house. The checklist on the following page may help you identify the cause of the higher bill.

Before going through the below checklist, perform a dye test in all your toilets. Take the lid off of the tank and place some drops of food coloring into the tank. Wait at least 30 minutes. While waiting, go through the below checklist. Do not flush the toilet while waiting. If there is any color in the toilet bowl, there is a leak.

#### **Bathroom Checks:**

- Faucets: Listen and look for drips and turn on to check for water going down the back of the faucet.
- Showerheads: Listen and look for drips and turn on and look for drips or stray sprays that are not coming out of the head itself.
- In the Tub: Listen and look for drips from the faucet and the handles.
- Under the Sink: Check for wet or damp areas under the sink.

#### **Laundry/Utility Room/Garage Checks:**

- Clothes Washer: Check for wet or damp areas under or around the washer.
- Supply Line: Check for any drips from the hose between the wall and the washer.
- Water Heater: Check for any wet or damp areas around the water heater. Also, check for any leaks from the pressure valve, located near the top of the tank.
- Water Softener: Listen for the sound of running water. This could indicate that your softener is stuck in recycle/regeneration mode. Place your softener in bypass mode to see if the meter stops moving.

#### **Kitchen Checks:**

- Faucets: Listen and look for drips and turn on to check for water going down the back of the faucet.
- Sprayer: Check to make sure that there is no water leaking from the sprayer hose.
- Under the Sink: Check for any wet or damp areas under the sink.
- Dishwasher: Check for any wet or damp areas around the dishwasher.
- Refrigerator (Ice Maker/Water Dispenser): Check for any wet or damp areas around the back of the refrigerator.

#### **Outside Checks:**

If you have added water to your swimming pool recently, this could cause a high bill.

If you have been watering new landscaping, either by hand or with your irrigation system, this could cause a high bill.

- Spigots: Listen and look for drips at and around the spigot. If there is a hose connected to the spigot, disconnect the hose and then look for a drip.

Swimming Pool: Have you added any water to your pool? If your pool has an auto fill valve, check it to make sure it is functioning correctly.

Solar Pool Heater: You may notice a loss of water in your pool, wet spots on your roof, or water in your gutters when there has been no rain. Check the panels for any rips, cracks, or tears and check the pipes and connection points for any signs of cracks or breaks.

Irrigation System: Turn your system on and let it run for a full cycle. Check for any broken sprinkler heads. Make sure only one zone is on at a time. Check your timer to ensure that it is scheduled for the correct days and times. Check your timer for any additional schedules that could also be running. If you notice a greener/thicker patch of lawn in your yard, the sprinkler head could need replacing, or there could be a break in the irrigation line underground.

#### **Miscellaneous Checks:**

Fire Suppression Systems: Check sprinkler heads to make sure they are not dripping.

Walls: Check for moisture or mold on walls, floors, and ceilings. This could indicate a leak in the pipe behind wall or in the ceiling.

Guests: Have you had anyone stay at your home for an extended period of time?

#### **Now to go back to the Toilets:**

Now that the dye has been in the tank of the toilet for at least 30 minutes, look in the bowl of the toilet. If it is any shade of the dye, there is a leak. The most common toilet leak is the flapper. Another cause is the fill valve. If the fill valve is the cause, there will be water draining into the overflow tube when the tank is full. You can also shine a flashlight into the overflow pipe to see the water easier.

#### **Other Considerations and Suggestions:**

If you have been washing your car, boat, or pressure washing your home, this could cause a high bill.

If you leave your home for an extended period of time, you may want to turn off your house valve. This will prevent the home from flooding if a serious leak develops while you are away. If your home does not have a house valve, contact us and we will send a technician to turn off the meter, a service fee may apply.

Dripping faucets can waste hundreds of gallons of water a month depending on the severity of the drip. Worn out washers are the main cause of these leaks.

Take care of leaks as soon as they are identified; it saves water, money, and limits the amount of water damage. Smaller repairs can often be made by the homeowner, while other repairs may require a licensed professional.