

## Find. Fix. Save. Fix a Leak Week Makes a Difference

Don't mistake dripping noises this winter for the sound of melting snow. It could be a leaking faucet, running toilet, or dripping shower. Household leaks cost homeowners thousands of gallons of water each year. In fact, 1 trillion gallons of water are wasted from residential leaks in the United States every year.



EPA's WaterSense program is sponsoring Fix a Leak Week, March 15 to 21, 2010, to encourage homeowners to find and fix leaks. There are steps you can take to save water with do-it-yourself fixes that can take minutes and cost only a few dollars.

Now is a great time to find out if you have household leaks because we usually use less water outside this time of the year. If your family's water bill exceeds 12,000 gallons per month, chances are you have a leak or two.

The first step to savings is to find the leaks. Seeking out leaks can be as easy as walking around your house and looking and listening for them. Sometimes leaks can be sneaky; toilets, for example, often have silent leaks.



Place a couple drops of food coloring into the toilet tank, wait 15 minutes without flushing, and if color appears in the bowl you know you have a leak. Flush afterward to avoid staining the toilet. Often an old, worn rubber flapper inside the tank is the culprit for a leaky toilet. Replacing the flapper only costs a few dollars and is simple enough to do yourself. Even tightening a dripping faucet connection can save hundreds of gallons annually.

The next step, fixing leaks, can often be done with tools you already have around the house. Don't forget to check pipes under sinks that could leak as well. A wrench and some pipe tape can help fix a dripping showerhead, which, if left alone dripping at a rate of 10 drips per minute, can waste 500 gallons a year. At a rate of 1 drip per second, it could waste 3,000 gallons a year!

If you find that you need to replace plumbing fixtures, save even more water by replacing them with WaterSense labeled models. WaterSense labels toilets, faucets, urinals, and--coming soon-- showerheads that use at least 20 percent less water and are independently tested and certified to perform as well as or better than standard plumbing fixtures. Learn more about [Fix a Leak Week, March 15 to 21, 2010](#).