



INDEPENDENCE

★ UTILITIES ★

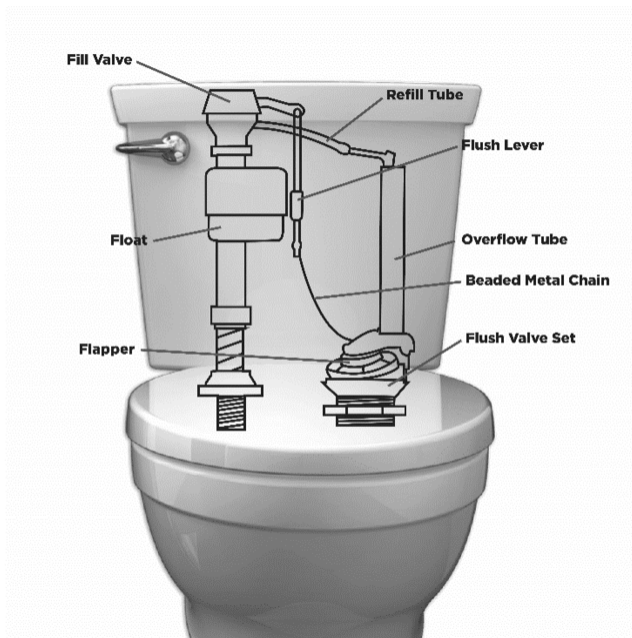


**Focusing on
water leaks**

Staying ahead of water leaks

The winter months can be a great time to assess if you have any water leaks throughout your house that may be contributing to increases in your water bill every month. In the February edition of the Utilities newsletter we share ways to check for a variety of leaks and prevent them.

Did you know leaking toilets are a common source of leaks and wasted water? A leaking toilet can waste anywhere from 30 to 500 gallons of water a day.



Assessing your toilet for leaks

Flapper Valve:

- This is a rubber object at the bottom of the tank that holds the water in the tank before each flush.
- Over time, water can seep around its edge and flows into the bowl around the clock.
- To determine if there is a problem with the flapper valve, place a drop of food coloring in the tank. If the dye ends up in the bowl, then it may be time to replace the flapper valve.

Tank Fill Valve:

- As the tank fill valve ages, it may result in a slow trickle of water flowing into the tank
- If the water level keeps rising, it will reach the top of the overflow pipe (located above the flapper valve)
- Observe if the water in the tank is even with the top of the overflow pipe. If so, then look down the pipe and determine if you see a slow cascade of water inside it, indicating a leak.
- A majority of the time adjusting the float ball or float will keep the tank from overflowing.
- If you continue to have issues, you may need to replace the tank fill valve assembly.

Handle:

- The handle lifts the flapper valve to allow water in the tank to flow into the bowl.
- As the handle ages, it may get out of adjustment and impact the closing of the flapper valve.
- To initially resolve this issue, consider tightening the nut that attaches to the side of the tank
- If the handle is broken and needs replacement, disconnect it from the flapper valve and loosen the nut
- Take the old handle to a hardware store and get a new one that looks exactly like the one you removed.



It is also important to look for other leaks throughout your house that may be contributing to higher-than-normal water bills. Consider the following:

Faucet Leaks:

- Faucet leaks can result in hundreds of gallons of water a day being wasted and usually are easy to detect
- If you find a leak around the washers or “O” rings on your faucet, these are generally easy to repair
- Other types of faucets and related leaks may be more difficult to repair
- Consider researching how to repair the leaking faucet with resources such as repair books, internet, talking to your local hardware store, or consulting a licensed plumber.

Water Pipe Leaks

- In some instances, water leaks within your water pipes may be detected by listening near your water main shut-off valve.
- If you are not using any water but hear a hissing noise, this could indicate there is a potential leak.
- In the instance where you turn off the main water shut-off valve and the noise stops, there is a leak inside your home.
- If the hissing noise does not stop when you turn off the main water shut-off valve, the leak is likely outside your home
- Outside leaks could be your responsibility to repair. If the leak is on your service line, located outside of the public right-of-way, it is your responsibility to repair.
- If your leak is in this location, you may need to call a plumber to have it repaired.
- If the leak is in the water meter pit or near the city’s water main, contact the City of Independence Water Department at [\(816\) 325-7658](tel:8163257658).

Water Heater Leaks:

- Water heaters come equipped with pressure relief valves, which are a safety feature if it malfunctions.
- Check the pressure relief valve on the discharge pipe located on the top or the side of the tank.
- If there are any drips present, you may have a leak and it needs to be repaired

Please keep in mind, that in order to keep our sewer systems running efficiently, it is essential to not flush wipes, facial tissues, and napkins. Oftentimes these products are labeled as “flushable” when they really are not able to process through our sewer system and treatment plants like toilet paper.

Rather, these consumer items can result in clogs and sewer overflows within your home or the sewer main serving your neighborhood. Oftentimes this then results in emergency maintenance costs and additional public health risks.

If you must use these consumer products, please dispose of them in the trash, not the toilet.

Don’t forget, wipes can clog pipes!

For sewer issues, please call Municipal Services at [\(816\) 325-7727](tel:8163257727).





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