How to determine if the leak is inside or outside

1. First find the building's shut-off valve (if you have one). If you do not have a shut-off valve, we recommend you have one installed. It can be indoors or outdoors, but should be near the location where the water line enters the building. If you don't know where the shut-off valve is, find where your water line enters the building, and start in the crawl space or mechanical room.
2. Close the building's shut-off valve and then turn on a water fixture to confirm that the water is off and check the water meter. If the shut-off valve is closed and the meter has stopped, the leak is inside your building. If you need help with repairs, or in locating the interior leak, call a licensed plumber.
3. If the meter continues to run with the building shut-off valve closed, your leak is in the lateral line (between the meter and the building) or it is in the irrigation system, depending on where the irrigation system is connected.
4. If a leak between the meter and the building is suspected, carefully walk the path again from the meter to where the line enters your building to locate the leak. Look for obvious signs of an outdoor water leak, such as ground sinking, dampness, lush grass in an isolated area or pooling of water. We recommend calling a licensed plumber to fix underground leaks.

If you find that your leak is in the main service line, to your building, please first contact USA Dig at 811 or visit their website www.usanorth.org, at least two working days before you dig! It is a Nevada State law and you could be subject to a $50,000 fine.

811 Know what's below. Call 811 before you dig.

How to check for a leaky toilet

Toilet leaks can range from small to large, constant to ran-dom and many are silent. Even a small leak can waste hundreds of dollars per year, or more, in water and sewer costs. Large leaks waste much more. The good news is it's easier than you think to fix a toilet leak.

1. If your toilet is functioning properly, no water should move from the tank to the bowl, until it is flushed. Remove the tank lid. Add a few drops of food coloring to the tank water. Do not use any other kind of dye - it can permanently stain your toilet bowl. Replace the tank lid.
2. After 15 minutes or so, look in the toilet bowl. If you see colored water you have a leak. If the water is clear it is not leaking from the tank to the bowl. Keep in mind that if you have a leak, the toilet can flush on its own, so make sure it hasn't (or wasn't manually) flushed while you were waiting.
3. The most common reason a toilet loses water from the tank to the bowl is a malfunctioning flapper. The flapper is a rubber control valve that opens when you flush your toilet. The fill valve could also cause leakage if the valve isn't completely closing after refilling the tank.
4. If you remove the tank lid, and can easily identify the cause of the leak, correct the problem and then try your leak test again. Bending the float or adjusting the rubber flapper should be considered temporary "fixes" since they won't permanently solve the problem. A small leak will only get worse over time.

Caution about in-tank toilet bowl cleaners:
In-tank chlorine toilet cleaners can damage the toilet flapper when used since the chemicals can damage a rubber parts, ultimately causing a leak.

How to check for leaks on an irrigation system

If you do not find the leak inside your building, you need to check the irrigation or sprinkler system. To check for irrigation leaks, you need to isolate the irrigation system from the main water line.

1. Turn the irrigation valve off. If the irrigation valve is turned off and the meter has stopped, the leak is in the irrigation system. Spotting leaks in irrigation or sprinkling systems is similar to troubleshooting internal plumbing - you have to look for signs of a leak, keep in mind, that not all leaks will come to the surface or show any sign.
2. When you have an irrigation system installed, it's a good idea to retain a copy of the system's layout. This will provide you with a map so you can "walk the system" to identify leaks. Any wet spots or pooling of water should be investigated.
3. In general, irrigation systems should be checked at least weekly, while the system is on (water is being delivered to landscaping), to ensure they are operating properly and your plants are getting the water they need. Also, inspect drip emitters and sprinkler-heads to ensure they are intact. Broken heads or emitters can release a lot of water sometimes unnoticed, driving up your water bill.

How RHGID uses water meters to check for leaks

1. We will locate the water meter. It is generally near the street at the corner of the lot marked near a metal post painted blue under a metal or concrete lid. Our team will brush away any soil or dirt before removing the lid. Water meters have numbers and spinning dials, which record usage. When water is not being used, none of the numbers or dials on the meter should move. Our meters have a small snowflake dials "the leak detector", which spins to record the low volume of water use that is common with leaks, this star can spin very slowly.
2. We will ask you to turn off every water using item inside and outside the building (one at a time if necessary) to identify a leaky fixture. Our team will watch the meter while you turn off the fixtures so they can report to you when the leak detector stops.
3. Our team will monitor the water meter for a minute or more. If the leak detector dial is moving, even at a slow rate, you might have a leak. We will check the meter read (numbers and sweep hand) at a set time, and then come back an hour later to check the reading - making sure that no water has been turned on during the hour. If the meter reading has increased, there is a leak.

Water Leak Detection

Did you know the average home can leak 25 to 30 gallons of water a day? Slow drips of water can add up quickly. Even small leaks can add up to thou-sands of gallons of water waste monthly. If the drip is on the hot water side you are also paying for wasted energy. By not repairing leaks you not only waste water and energy but you may also be subjecting your home and personal belongings to severe water damage. Identifying and repairing water leaks is a great way to reduce the amount of water that you are billed.

Do not turn the valve that is part of the water meter. ONLY RHGID PERSONNEL CAN OPERATE THE WATER METER AND VALVE.

This information is provided as a public service of the Round Hill General Improvement District. Any action by a water customer as a result of this information is the sole responsibility of the customer. RHGID recommends using a licensed contractor. A licensed contractor will know the permit process for Douglas County, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency and RHGID.

Additional Questions?

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WATER LEAKS

ROUND HILL GENERAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT