



STOP FLUSHING YOUR MONEY AWAY

Repair Your Leaking Toilets

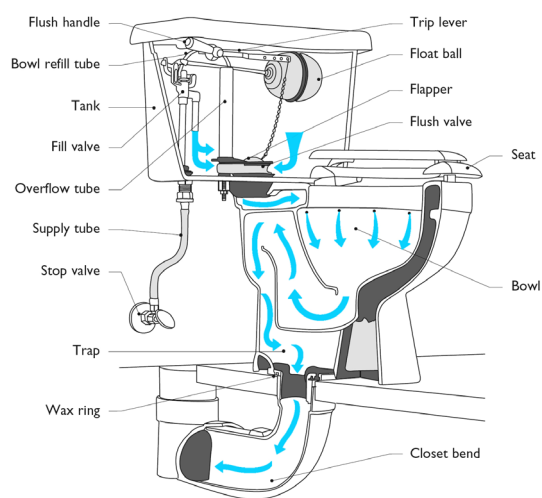


Image source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)

High water bills are often caused by leaking toilets that waste large amounts of water.

Most water waste in a toilet is caused by a leaking flapper or a faulty fill valve. An open fill valve can waste three to five gallons per minute or 3,600 gallons a day.

WHAT CAUSES A TOILET LEAK?

- The flapper becomes warped or damaged and does not provide a watertight seal on the flush valve. In-tank toilet cleaners can cause flapper damage.
- The flapper, trip lever or chain may lose its alignment with the flush valve, leaving a gap that can cause a leak.
- The flush valve can develop small cuts or other damage that causes a leak between it and the flapper. This is usually caused by grit or sediment.
- The fill valve can become stuck in an open position causing water waste as it flows down the overflow tube. This can happen when your water pressure changes in your home.

HOW CAN I TEST FOR TOILET LEAKS?

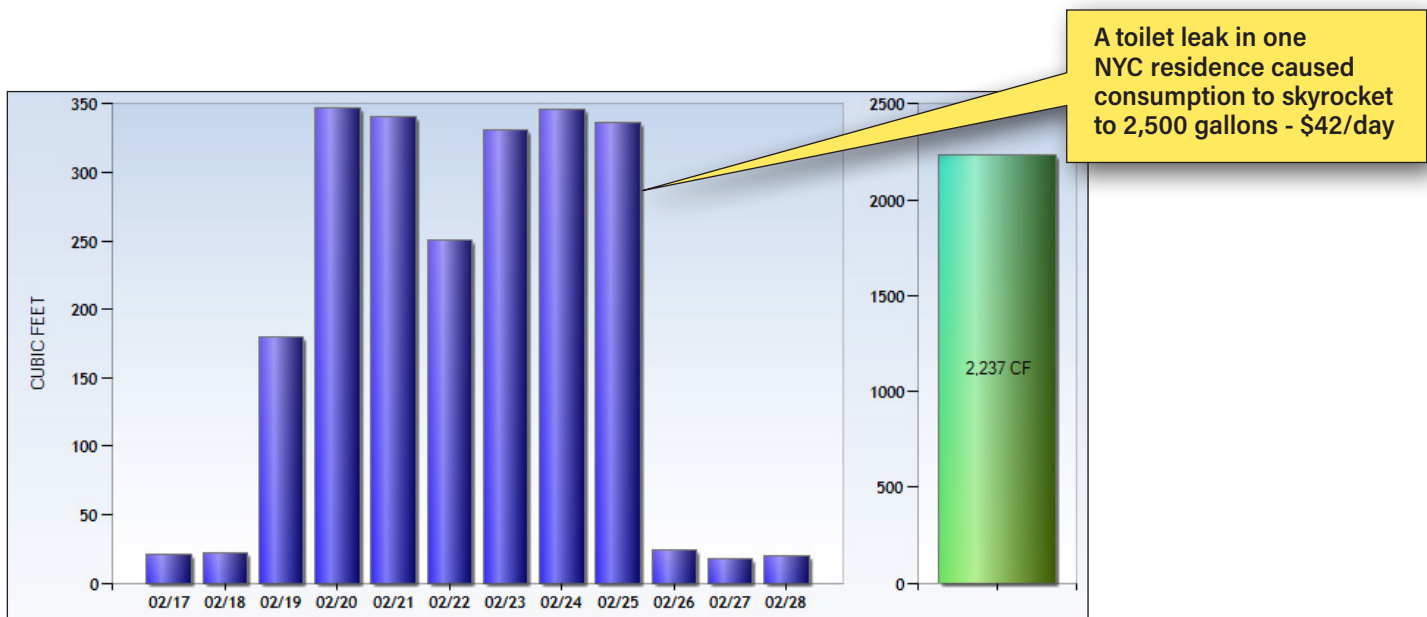
Listen: The toilet should make a refill noise only when the tank is refilling after a flush. It should not make a noise at any other time. If your toilet makes a noise that requires you to “jiggle the handle,” then you may have a leak or your flapper may need to be adjusted.

Look: A large leak will cause moving water in the bowl long after the tank has refilled from a flush. You may also see water flowing down the sides of the bowl. Rust stains on the inside of the bowl are an indication of corroding metal parts inside the tank caused by a leak.

To check for smaller leaks, place some food coloring in the tank and wait for 15-20 minutes. If color appears in the bowl, you have a leak. The sooner the color appears, the larger the leak.

Check your water use online: DEP has installed a citywide Automated Meter Reading system (AMR) that reads all water meters at least four times a day and provides an early warning of leaks and high bills. If you have an AMR device installed on your property, you can track your daily water use online by going to nyc.gov/dep and clicking on the blue “My DEP Account” button. Large increases in daily use over time may be a sign of a leak.

Size of Leak	Amount of Water Waste Per Day	Approximate Cost of Waste Per Day
Small	30 gallons	\$0.51
Medium	250 gallons	\$4.22
Large	Up to 6,000 gallons	As much as \$101



HOW TO STOP TOILET LEAKS

1. If Your Toilet Was Manufactured Before 1994:

Consider buying a new high-efficiency toilet (HET) that has the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) "WaterSense" logo. These high-performing, water-saving toilets can save you approximately \$30 per year for each person in your home or apartment, in addition to eliminating leaks and improving flushing power.

Look for the WaterSense label when you shop or get a list of qualified toilets from EPA's WaterSense website at epa.gov/watersense.

2. If Your Toilet Was Manufactured After 1994

If your toilet was manufactured after 1994 then you probably have a toilet that uses only 1.2 gallons per flush. You can confirm this by looking for a "1.2 gpf/4.5 lpf" imprint on the back top surface of the bowl behind the back of the toilet seat. You might still want to consider buying a new WaterSense HET for better flushing performance. It could save you about \$7 per person per year.

You might want to consider other ways to fix your toilet leak, such as:

- **Replacing the flapper:** There are some common replacement flappers on the market for water saving toilets, but not all of them will fit your toilet. You should always make sure that the new flapper is adjusted correctly for your water-saving toilet. You can find a list of replacement flappers at toiletflapper.org.
- **Replacing the flapper and fill valve:** If the problem is a faulty fill valve, you can replace it yourself or call a licensed plumber to make the repair. Do not replace an old fill valve that has a float ball with a new fill valve that has a float ball. Instead, use a new piston-valve type fill valve. This device is often called a "Fluidmaster valve" and is manufactured by Fluidmaster, Korky, and American Standard.

Please note: DEP does not endorse any of these products.

FLUSHOMETER TOILETS

About 30% of the residential toilets in New York City do not have tanks but use a hand valve called a "flushometer" attached to a pipe coming right out of the wall. This type of toilet does not have many moving parts but leaks can occur. If your house or apartment has a flushometer toilet, take the following precautions:

- If you see moving water in the bowl when the toilet has not been flushed, the valve is leaking and needs to be replaced or repaired.
- If you turn off the water to your house or apartment, do not flush the toilet. Be sure to flush the toilet once or twice after the water has been turned back on to make sure that air has been vented from the system and the flushometer valve is opening and closing properly.
- So-called "phantom flushes" can be caused by pressure changes in the building, and should be investigated by a licensed plumber.

SOURCES OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Go to nyc.gov/dep to track your water usage online through your "My DEP Account", you will also be able to sign up for leak notifications. To learn more about toilet leaks, visit nyc.gov/site/dep/water/detecting-toilet-leaks.page.

Learn more about WaterSense Program certified high-efficiency toilets by visiting epa.gov/watersense.



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