

Don't flush your money down the toilet!

How to Find and Fix Toilet Leaks

Toilets are necessary in our daily lives. When they leak, they can waste hundreds, even thousands of gallons of water a day.

This can become very costly, as these leaks are often silent and go unnoticed until we read your meter. Your bill could increase dramatically in a monthly billing cycle.

About 20% of all toilets leak. Most of these leaks occur from the tank on the back of the toilet and into the bowl. From there they go into the sewer or your septic tank. They might not make any noise.

The good news is, most toilet leaks are easy to fix.

Worn out flappers are a major cause of common leaks. They should be replaced every 3-5 years. Flappers are inexpensive and can be found at most local hardware stores.

Fill or inlet valves can become clogged with dirt or debris. Mineral deposits can build up in home plumbing. Through normal use or after plumbing work in your system, small pieces can break off and clog toilet fill/inlet valves.

Finding a Toilet Leak

We have dye tablets available in our office upon request!

1. Take the lid off your toilet tank.
 2. Put in a few drops of food coloring or a few dye tablets.
 3. Stir the water in the tank with a long spoon or stick.
 4. Wait 25-30 minutes.
 5. Do not flush or use the toilet.
 6. Look in the bowl. If the coloring has seeped from the tank into the bowl, you have a toilet leak.
- If the float is not adjusted properly, water can continue to fill into the tank and drain down the overflow tube. Pull up on the float. If the water stops running, you might need to adjust the float.
 - The fill valve/inlet valve is not set properly or has malfunctioned. This sometimes causes a hiss or squeal when filling. Try adjusting the fill valve. You might need to replace it.
 - If a black residue rubs off when you touch the flapper, it's time to replace it.

How to Clean Debris from the Fill/Inlet Valve

1. Turn off the water supply to the toilet.
2. Remove the top cap from the fill/inlet valve.
3. Remove the loose washers and internal parts from inside the valve.
4. Confirm the seals are in good shape.
5. Place a plastic cup over the center of the fill/inlet valve.
6. Slowly turn the water back on. The water will flow out forcefully through the center of the fill/inlet valve and remove any debris.
7. Turn off the water supply to the toilet.
8. Reinstall the fill/inlet valve parts and replace the cap.
9. Turn the water supply on.
10. Check to see if the fill/inlet valve turns off properly when the tank is full.
11. If not, you may need to replace the fill/inlet valve.

The advice here is general. JCWSA recommends contacting a licensed plumber for professional advice if you require additional assistance.