

Have you ever received a water bill that seems unusually high?

It is important to find the possible reasons for high utility bills as soon as possible in an effort to lower consumption and save money. With the following tips and advice, you will save money while conserving a valuable commodity that we cannot live without!

Why is my water bill so high?

1. Did you install an irrigation system? Does it have a leak? A small leak in your automatic irrigation system can waste ~6,300 gallons of water per month.
2. During the summer months, are you watering your lawn more frequently? Running your sprinkler for just one hour can use 400 gallons of water. If you are using a hose to water, did you forget to turn it off for an extended amount of time?
3. Have you checked for leaking faucets or a running toilet in the home? Depending on the water pressure in your home, a running toilet can leak 1 gallon of water per minute which adds up to 1,440 gallons per day!
4. Did you fill a swimming pool with a garden hose? Did you use a pressure washer to clean your house, deck or driveway? At four gallons per minute, pressure washing for four hours can use ~960 gallons of water.
5. Have you had house guests for an extended period of time? On average, a person uses 65 gallons of water per day (gpd).

What can I do?

1. Irrigation System and Spigots:

An irrigation system should be checked EACH spring before use to make sure it was not damaged by frost or freezing. An irrigation system with pressure set at 60 pounds per square inch that has a leak $1/32^{\text{nd}}$ of an inch in diameter (about the thickness of a dime) can waste about 6,300 gallons of water per month!

Do not use automatic timed lawn sprinklers, turn them on and off by hand. Consider installing rain sensors, not only will they save you money but it will extend the sprinkler system life span.

Check your garden hose for leaks at its connection to the spigot. If it leaks while you run your hose, replace the nylon or runner hose washer and ensure a tight connection to the spigot using pipe tape and a wrench

2. "Running" Toilet Leak or Leaking Faucet

Check your toilets for leaks by placing a few drops of food coloring in the tank. If after 15 minutes, the dye shows up in the bowl, then you have a leak.

Toilet leaks can range from small to large, constant to random, being heard or silent. In a properly functioning toilet, no water should move from the tank to the bowl, unless the toilet is being flushed. Most toilet leaks are caused by a faulty valve (also known as a "flush valve ball" or "tank stopper"). A flapper valve should be replaced every 3 to 5 years. The second most common-type of toilet leak is caused by an improperly adjusted or broken fill valve.

A leaking faucet is frequently the result of a bad rubber washer which is located typically located under the handle. In order to replace the washer, you will need to shut off the water under the sink and remove the handle. Check out the internet or local home centers on help on how to repair faucet leaks.

3. Check your water usage or call the Newburyport DPS Water Department Business office to review your bill or schedule an appointment to check your water meter.

You can read your meter on an hourly, daily or weekly basis. Simply record your meter reading at the beginning of a measurement period and again at the end of the period. The difference between these two meter readings will be the water used during that period. Note that your water meter reads in cubic feet and can be easily converted to gallons by multiplying the reading by 7.48 per cubic feet. If you are checking your home for leaks, make sure all faucets and outside spigots are off and no one is using water then check the "leak" wheel indicator located on the meter head (it's the small blue wheel) and make sure that it is not moving. If it does move that is an indication that water is flowing and you may have a leak.

If you suspect a leak, please contact our business office at 978-465-4420 and we will do a courtesy check on your home.