



Water leaks



Identifying a water leak

A high water bill may prompt you to check for water leaks. Some leaks can be hard to find and not all water leaks are visible. Common signs may include:

1. Warped or discoloured cupboards, bench tops, walls and floors.
2. Damp or discoloured carpets.
3. Drips or stains on the side of the hot water system.
4. Wet patches or puddles in the garden or on a driveway.
5. Bright green areas of grass or localised increased vegetation growth in the garden.
6. Water pooling between your water meter and the connection with the water mains.

Water providers read meters every three months and if water usage increases significantly, it will usually send a letter to alert the property owner that they may have a leak. You can regularly read your water meter to detect leaks early.

Leaking taps, toilets that keep running after they've been flushed and leaking underground pipes can waste a lot of water. A tap dripping once every second can waste over three litres a day and a running toilet or leaking underground water pipe can waste thousands of litres per day.

Check our '[High water bill](https://ewon.com.au/factsheets)' and other factsheets at ewon.com.au/factsheets.

How to read your water meter

1. Lift the lid and clean the plastic window to expose the black and red numbers.
2. Read the numbers from left to right.
3. The black numbers, kilolitres, are what you need to record for your meter reads.
4. The red numbers show litres and are ignored for billing purposes as you are only billed for kilolitres used.

Reading a water meter

Kilolitres (kL)

0 5 0 4

Litres (L)

1 9 7

Water leaks can lead to significant water loss at a property

What is your responsibility?

Property owners are responsible for the installation, repair, maintenance and replacement of all water pipes and fittings up to the connection to the mains. This can include pipes that are not on the property, between the meter and the mains.

What is your water provider responsible for?

Water providers are responsible for the water mains and the water meter itself, excluding the tap that turns the water off.

Test for water leaks

Check for damp areas or water pooling near your water meter or water pipes. If you suspect a leak, follow the steps below:

1. Turn off all taps and water outlets (except the stop tap at the water meter and the toilet).
2. Check the dishwasher and washing machine are off and that no one in the house is using any water.
3. Take a reading of your meter dial.
4. Wait for an hour and take another reading.
5. Make sure you don't use any water during this time.
6. If there is a difference in the readings there may be a leak.

Need help to reduce water waste?

Contact your water provider to ask what assistance it can offer to reduce water waste.

For example, Sydney Water has a PlumbAssist program to provide essential or emergency plumbing work for customers in financial difficulty. It also has a WaterFix plumbing service to help customers save water at home by fixing leaking taps and toilet and installing water efficient showerheads, toilets and low regulators.

Check out our factsheet on 'Saving energy and water around the home' at ewon.com.au/factsheets



How we assist

If your water provider is a member of EWON, and you're not satisfied with the action it takes to address your concerns, you can contact us for assistance. If it is not a member of EWON, contact us for advice.



In NSW water is supplied by different providers depending on where you live. Not all water providers are members of EWON. Visit our website to see a full list of members. ewon.com.au/members

What happens if you identify a leak?

If you think there is a leak at your property you should:

- contact your water provider for advice. It may ask you to have a registered plumber inspect your pipes,
- check your water bills to see if your usage has increased because of the leak,
- let your water provider know about the leak and ask if your bills have increased.

What about a concealed leak?

If leaks are concealed (or hidden), such as when they're underground, a large volume of water may be lost before the leak is identified. Often it's only when a customer notices a considerable increase in their quarterly water bill that they become aware of a possible leak.

Sydney Water and Hunter Water have concealed leak policies and may credit your account once a concealed leak is repaired by a licensed plumber. Visit their websites to view their policies.

If your water is supplied by a local council or other provider, ask if it has have a concealed leak policy.

The amount credited is generally at the water provider's discretion and it may limit the number of credits it applies within a given period. For example, Sydney Water's policy states that it will only give one credit every five years at the same property.



Make a complaint or enquiry

Freecall	1800 246 545* Mon - Fri, 9am - 5pm
Freefax	1800 812 291
Freepost	Reply Paid 86550 Sydney South NSW 1234
Interpreter	131 450
TTY/Voice	133 677
Online	ewon.com.au
In person	Level 11, 133 Castlereagh St, Sydney, NSW 2000

* If you are calling from a mobile phone, let us know and we will call you back.