Detecting leaks and reading your water meter

Know how to check for leaks and understand how to read your water meter to help you reduce water consumption and save money.

Did you know?

- A slow dripping tap can waste more than 9000 litres of water per year. Make sure you turn all your taps off properly and check washers for wear.
- A continuously running toilet can waste more than 60 000 litres of water per year. Check for leaks regularly and fix them as soon as possible.
- A tiny leak in your pool or spa can lose a large amount of water and cost you money.
- Many household leaks are not easily detected. It's important to find out how much water you use and investigate any unexplained increases in use.

Measuring your household water consumption

- Check your water meter monthly or quarterly to monitor and understand how much water you use. This will also help locate leaks early, saving you both water and money.
- Check your rates notice for water usage information. The notice may include your household's daily water consumption figure as well as an average figure for all households in your area.
- Complete the Home waterwise quiz. Contact your local council for a copy of the quiz or visit the Department of Energy and Water Supply website: www.dews.qld.gov.au.

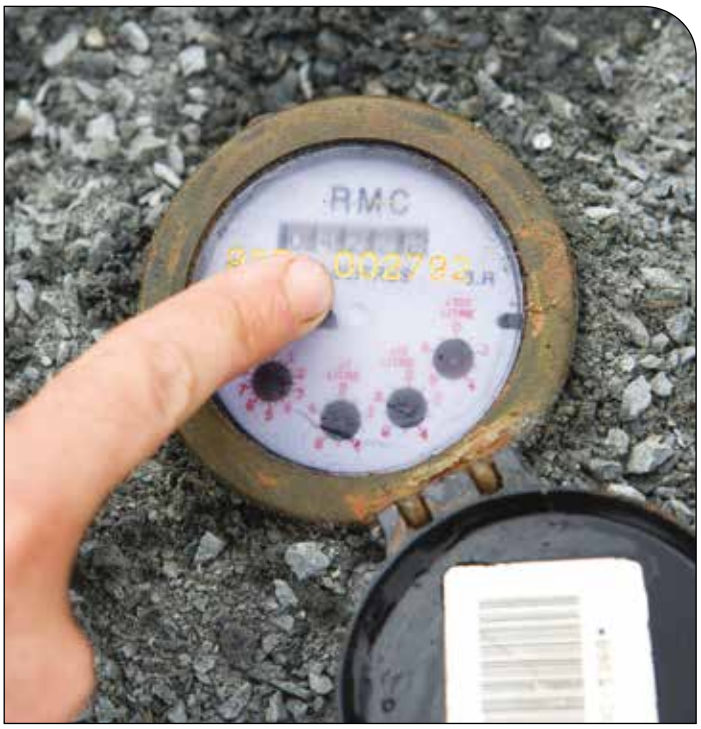
Locating your water meter

A water meter measures the amount of water that each property uses. It will generally be located outside in the ground towards the front of a property. Most are at or below ground level, and have a metal or plastic lid. If you live in a unit or apartment block, there may not be an individual water meter for each residence. You may want to investigate the feasibility of installing individual meters.

Using your water meter to detect leaks

1. Find your water meter and write down the numbers shown.
2. Turn off all taps tightly and make sure that no-one will be using any water on the premises for the next hour.
3. After one hour, check the water meter reading. If the numbers have changed, there may be a leak.
4. If it appears there is a leak, the first item to check is the toilets. Turn off the water valves located under each toilet and then redo steps 1 to 3.
5. If the numbers haven't changed during this time, you may have a leaking toilet. To check this, put a little food colouring in the toilet cistern. If, without flushing, the colouring begins to appear in the bowl, the cistern rubbers need to be repaired.

   Note: After the test, flush your toilet twice to prevent the food colouring from staining the toilet bowl.
6. Alternatively, if the numbers have increased, there is a leak somewhere else on your property. For further investigation, contact a licenced plumber.



How to read your water meter

There is a range of different water meters in use across the state. All have a combination of black numbers and red numbers and/or dials. Five examples are shown in the diagram below.

The black numbers register kilolitres (kL = a thousand litres).

There are three red numbers or dials registering litres. (If there is a fourth red number or dial, this indicates tenths of a litre.)

Read only the first three red numbers or dials. Numbers are read from left to right, while dials are read in a clockwise direction. If you have trouble reading your water meter, contact your local council.

More information

For more information on water saving practices, contact your local council or water service provider or visit the Department of Energy and Water Supply website at www.dews.qld.gov.au.