

Leaking Toilet Tank

According to the American Water Works Association (AWWA), toilets are responsible for approximately 27 percent of the water used in homes on a daily basis. The amount of water used by toilets is only increased when there is a leak. A leaking toilet tank can result in an incredible loss of water every minute it has not been stopped. It oftentimes goes undetected until a leak test has been conducted.

What causes toilet leaking?

- Ineffective flush valve system
- Fill valve problems

An ineffective flush valve system is the most common culprit of toilet leaking. At the bottom of a toilet tank is the flapper, or flush valve ball. The ball or flapper is supposed to form a watertight seal. After a period of time this part can begin to deteriorate or become defective. When this occurs, water begins to leak around it into the toilet bowl. Although this leak is the most common, it can be the most difficult to detect, because the toilet leaking is silent.

While the ineffective flush valve is responsible for most leaks, fill valve problems result in a leaking toilet tank as well. The second most frequent cause of a leaking toilet tank is a broken or inadequately placed fill valve, or ball cock. Problems occur when the shut-off valve does not completely close or the float is placed too high. If this happens, the tank will experience a continuous flow of water, which then enters the overflow tube.

Water and money consumed before a leak test

Toilet leaking results in a tremendous amount of water loss. Every day that a silent leak goes undetected can amount to as much as 300 gallons of water. That is three times the amount of water the average American uses in an entire day. When water is wasted, that easily translates to money spent on higher water bills. Depending on the size of the leak, it is possible to end up paying an extra \$500.00 every year on water that was never used. Performing a leak test regularly allows you to take action before more water, and ultimately money, can be wasted.

How can I tell if the toilet is leaking?

A leak test can be performed by placing a toilet tablet into the toilet tank once the filling has stopped. Wait for a period of 10 minutes, and then check for color in the bowl. If color emerges, you have a leak problem that needs to be fixed right away. The toilet tablet is very inexpensive. They cost as little as \$0.19 for one package containing two tablets.

Leaks involving the fill valve are not as easily detected. Once the toilet tank is full, remove the tank covering and check for water flowing in the overflow tube. If this is occurring, you have a leaking toilet tank on your hands. A water leak sensor is available to alert you as soon as toilet leaking is detected. The device flashes a green LED light when the toilet is properly functioning. Once toilet leaking has been sensed, the LED will flash a red light and make a beeping sound. A water leak sensor costs approximately \$20.00, and pays for itself many times over during the course of a year in the money you will save by knowing right away when you are facing a leaking toilet tank.