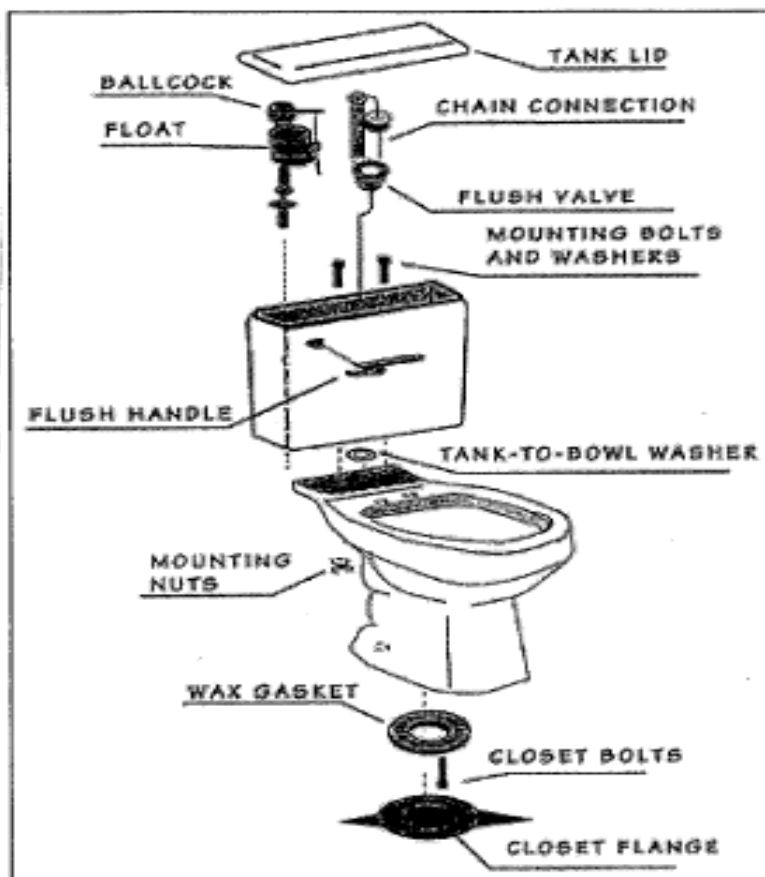


**GAINES CHARTER TOWNSHIP
WATER & SEWER DEPARTMENT
616-698-6640**

Items to Check When Questioning High Water Usage

Check the leak detector (the little dial on the face of the meter); is it moving? Watch the dial for a few minutes. If there is the slightest movement of the leak detector, something within the home is using water. A quick check by the homeowner for obvious leaks like a dripping faucet, tub/shower valve, hose bib, would get it narrowed down to other harder to detect items that may leak, such as:





- **Leaking toilet:** Float adjustments, flush valves, and assemblies are all components that can attribute to water slipping by between the tank water and the bowl. **Dye strips** can be offered to the homeowner to insert into the toilet tank. It is advised to leave it in the tank for a longer period than the twenty minutes stated on the package. Six to eight hours is suggested because of pressure differentials within the water main. A good time to insert the dye strips is before bedtime. Then check in the morning to see if dye has entered the bowl. (The homeowner should also write down the meter read numbers at night and recheck the numbers in the morning to see if there is any usage overnight.)



- **Humidifiers:** These are also many times a float-activated water inlet. These typically can be hard to detect by sound. An internal visual inspection of the device should be done by an experienced contractor.
- **Pressure Vacuum Breakers:** For the underground irrigation system, check all valves, float assemblies, and test ports for potential leakage.
- **Solenoid valves:** Irrigation systems typically have these valves buried outside in the lawn areas. Locating and verifying a leak can be a tricky. A lawn irrigation company would be the homeowners best bet. Many other water-supplied appliances also have these valves, including ice makers, dishwashers, washing machines and water softeners to name a few. They can periodically stick and seep by (leak) without detection.
- **Sump pumps:** Water activated pumps through a float assembly are another item to check and can be hard to detect.
- **Relief Valves:** Slight drips from a leaking relief valve on water heaters and vent discharge due to water pressure fluctuation on backflow preventers.

Small leaks that run constantly make little impression on people who do not realize the significance. Yet without attracting attention, a leaking toilet can waste as much water needed to supply several families. Since the meter reader only reads your meter at intervals of approximately 90 days, it is in your best interest to detect any possible leaks and make the necessary repairs as soon as possible.

A continuous leak from a hole the size shown below, at an average household pressure of 60 PSI (pounds per square inch), would over a 3 month billing period, result in the waste and cost listed below. This waste and cost is in addition to the amount of water you normally use and pay for.

| STREAM DIAMETER AT 60 PSI | WASTE PER QUARTER IN GALLONS | RESIDENDAL COST DUE TO WASTE * | | |
|---|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------|---------|
| | | WATER | SEWER | TOTAL |
|  1/4 " | 1,181,500 | \$2351 | \$2847 | \$5199 |
|  1/8" | 296,000 | \$589 | \$713 | \$1,302 |
|  1/16" | 74,000 | \$147 | \$178 | \$325 |
|  1/32" | 18,500 | \$37 | \$45 | \$82 |

* Cost calculated based on residential water and sewer rates as of 01/01/10.

Do a leak check today. **Remember, you pay for all the water that goes through the meter!**