

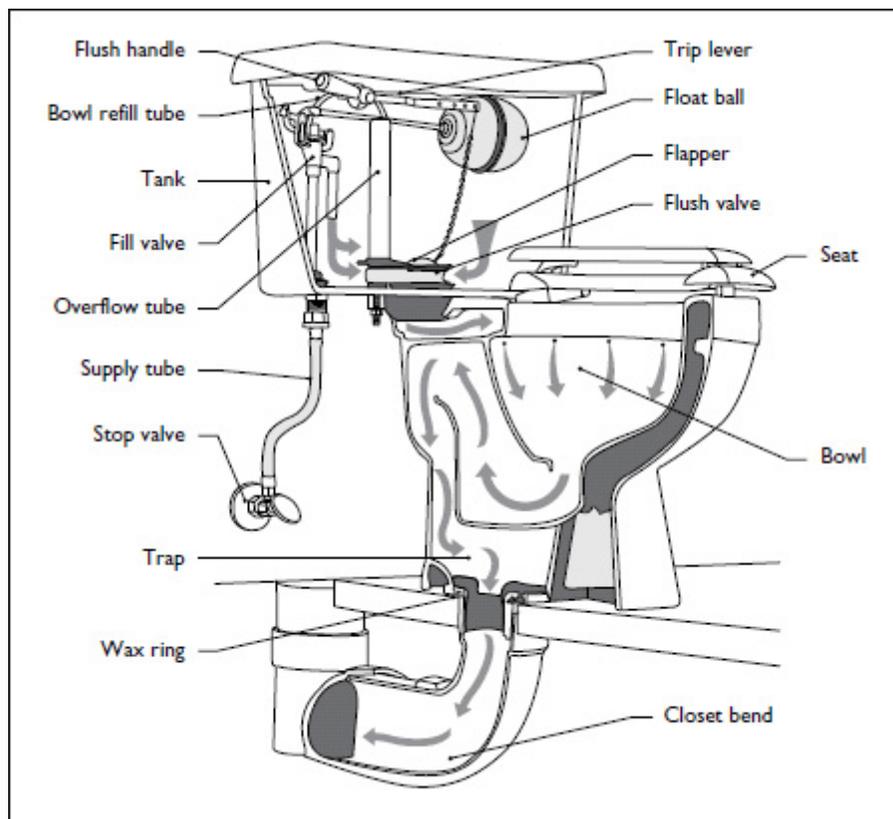
# Gaines Charter Township

## Water & Sewer Department

### Items to Check When Questioning High Water Usage

**Water meter:** The meter is equipped with a leak detector. Make sure no water is being used in the home (water using fixtures and devices should be turned off) then look at the meter. If you have a newer model, the leak detector is under the plastic lid that flips up and will show as a small “+” sign. If the + is visible; water is moving thru the meter. The older model meter has a small dial on the face of the meter. If the dial is moving, something in the home is using water. A quick check for obvious leaks such as a dripping faucet, outdoor hose and a tub/shower valve may lead you to the water user.

**Toilets:** Float adjustments, flush valve and assemblies are all components that can attribute to water slipping by between the tank water and the bowl. Dye strips can help determine if water is circulating in the toilet. It is advised to leave the strips in the tank longer than the 20 minutes stated on the package; six to eight hours is recommended. A good time to insert the dye strips is before bedtime. If dye has entered the bowl in the morning then water is leaking within the toilet. Writing down the meter read numbers at night and again in the morning will indicated how much water was used overnight.



**Water-driven sump pump:** This type of sump pump uses pressurized municipal water and is triggered by a second float switch in the sump basin, positioned higher than that of the primary. Failure of the primary pump will cause the backup to kick on, municipal water is pulled to keep the sump pumping. These use a considerable amount of municipal water to remove water from the sump basin. A battery backup system is recommended over a water-driven backup.

**Irrigation system:** For an underground irrigation system check pressure vacuum breakers, all valves, float assemblies and test ports for potential leaks. Remember to winterize the irrigation system to avoid freezing your pipes and valves.

**Solenoid valves:** Irrigation systems typically have these valves buried in the lawn. An irrigation company should be called to locate and verify a leak. Many other water-supplied appliances have these valves as well such as an ice maker, dishwasher, washing machine, water softener and furnace humidifier. They can periodically stick and leak without detection.

**Furnace humidifier:** These often have a float-activated water inlet with a solenoid valve. A faulty valve can cause water to leak by. This leak is typically hard to detect by sound. An internal inspection of the humidifier should be done by an experienced contractor. It is recommended that the inspection be completed prior to the heating season and the water to the humidifier should be shut off during the cooling season.

**Relief valve:** Drips from a leaking relief valve on a water heater should be fixed by a plumber.

**Backflow preventer:** A backflow preventer leaking from or out of a vent is usually due to a bad seal. They can also discharge water due to a pressure fluctuation and should be maintained by a plumber.

Small leaks that run constantly can be significant. A leaking toilet can waste the same amount of water needed to supply several families. Since the meter reader reads the meter at intervals of approximately 90 days, it is in your best interest to detect leaks and make repairs as soon as possible.

**Do a leak check today!**

### Potential Water Waste Based on Leak Size

Leak stream diameter at 60 psi	Gallons/ Quarter	Residential Cost Due To Waste*		
		Water	Sewer	Total
drip 	1,400	\$4	\$5	<b>\$9</b>
1/32" 	18,500	\$50	\$60	<b>\$110</b>
1/16" 	74,000	\$210	\$240	<b>\$450</b>
1/8" 	296,000	\$845	\$960	<b>\$1,805</b>
1/4" 	1,181,500	\$3,370	\$3,840	<b>\$7,210</b>

\*Cost calculated based on Gaines Township residential water & sewer rates as of 1/1/19