**The following information is provided for you to help determine if you have a toilet leak. Auburn Water System employees are not allowed in a customer’s home.**

Water leaks account for approximately 12% of all water use in the average American home, and the toilet is one of the most likely places to find them.

Sometimes it is easy to tell that your toilet is leaking - you hear the sound of running water or a faint hissing or trickling. But many times, water flows through the tank silently, which is why these leaks are often overlooked.

# Areas to look at for toilet leaks

Water on the floor or a running toilet could signal the need for a minor repair, a major one or even a new toilet, and a few simple tests can help you decide which it is. The location of the leaking water provides one of the main clues, as is the accompanying presence of sewer smells. Whatever the cause, it's important to correct it quickly, or you may have to do significant repairs to the floor.

## Water Under the Tank

A puddle of water under the toilet tank usually isn't a cause for alarm, but it can be serious. In most cases, it's coming from the rubber washers under the bolts that hold the tank to the bowl. You can confirm this by reaching under the tank and feeling for dripping water at the points where the bolts are connected. If you feel water there, you may be able to stop the leak by tightening the bolts. If not, replace the washers. The water may also be condensation dripping off the tank. If you see water seeping through the tank and forming drops in just one location, however, the tank is probably cracked. If it is, you have to replace it.

## Water Around the Bowl

Water pooling around the base of a toilet is never a good thing, and if you can smell sewer gases, it probably means the wax ring seal has broken. There's no other way to fix it other than to pull the toilet and replace it. If the water seems localized near the back of the toilet and isn't coming from the tank, the bowl may be cracked, and if it is, you'll probably see water drops forming around the crack.

## Condensation

Condensation occurs when the bathroom is warm and humid and the water in the tank is very cold. In extreme cases, it can form puddles on the floor, and eventually the tank and walls may turn black with mold. Condensation is more common in the winter, when the groundwater is cold. Some homeowners solve the problem by wrapping the tank in a protective cover or providing extra ventilation for the toilet area. Another solution is to install an anti-sweat valve in the toilet supply line. It feeds hot water to the tank to raise the temperature inside it.

## Internal Leaks

**Look at the water level.** First, remove the toilet tank lid. If the water level is well above the overflow pipe, check the float. The float rises with the water and tells the inlet valve on the ballcock (the float) when to shut off the water valve. If the water keeps flowing past the overflow tube, there is likely a leak. The water level should be approximately 1 inch below the top of the overflow tube.

To check the inlet valve, flush the toilet and lift the rod that holds the float as the water rises. If you hear the water stop, the problem is caused by the float, and it likely needs to be replaced. A new float and rod are very easy to replace and will only cost a few dollars at the hardware store.

**The new toilet repair kits do away with the float and are more efficient. They are a bit more involved to install, but in the long run are a better choice.**

You may have a leaking flapper valve. To test for that type of leak:

1) Remove the toilet tank lid.

2) Drop one dye tablet or 10 drops of food coloring into the tank.

3) Put the lid back on. Do not flush.

 4) Wait at least 10-15 minutes, and then look in the bowl. If you see colored water, you have a leak from the flapper.